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# The Christian As Minister

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*An Inquiry  
Into Servant Ministry  
In The United  
Methodist  
Church*

Second Edition  
1985

Robert F. Kohler, *editor*

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Printed in the United States of America.

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*Photography credits:* Jini Dellaccio, page 2; John C. Goodwin/United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, pages 8, 32, 51.; Methodist Theological School in Ohio, pages 11, 65; Margaret Cox, page 17; Phil Degginger/Drew University, page 25; From "Sacrament Series: Baptism" © 1978 by Graded Press, page 28; Bob Smith, page 35; M. E. Warren, page 39; From "The Challenge of Chaplaincy", pages 43, 45, 70, 72; Virginia Wesleyan College photo, page 48; Ed Moultrie/United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, page 54; Scarritt College photo, page 79; Religious News Service Photo, page 89; Charles Cole, page 90.

*Cover illustration:* Detail from linocut "Crucifixion" by R. O. Hodgell.

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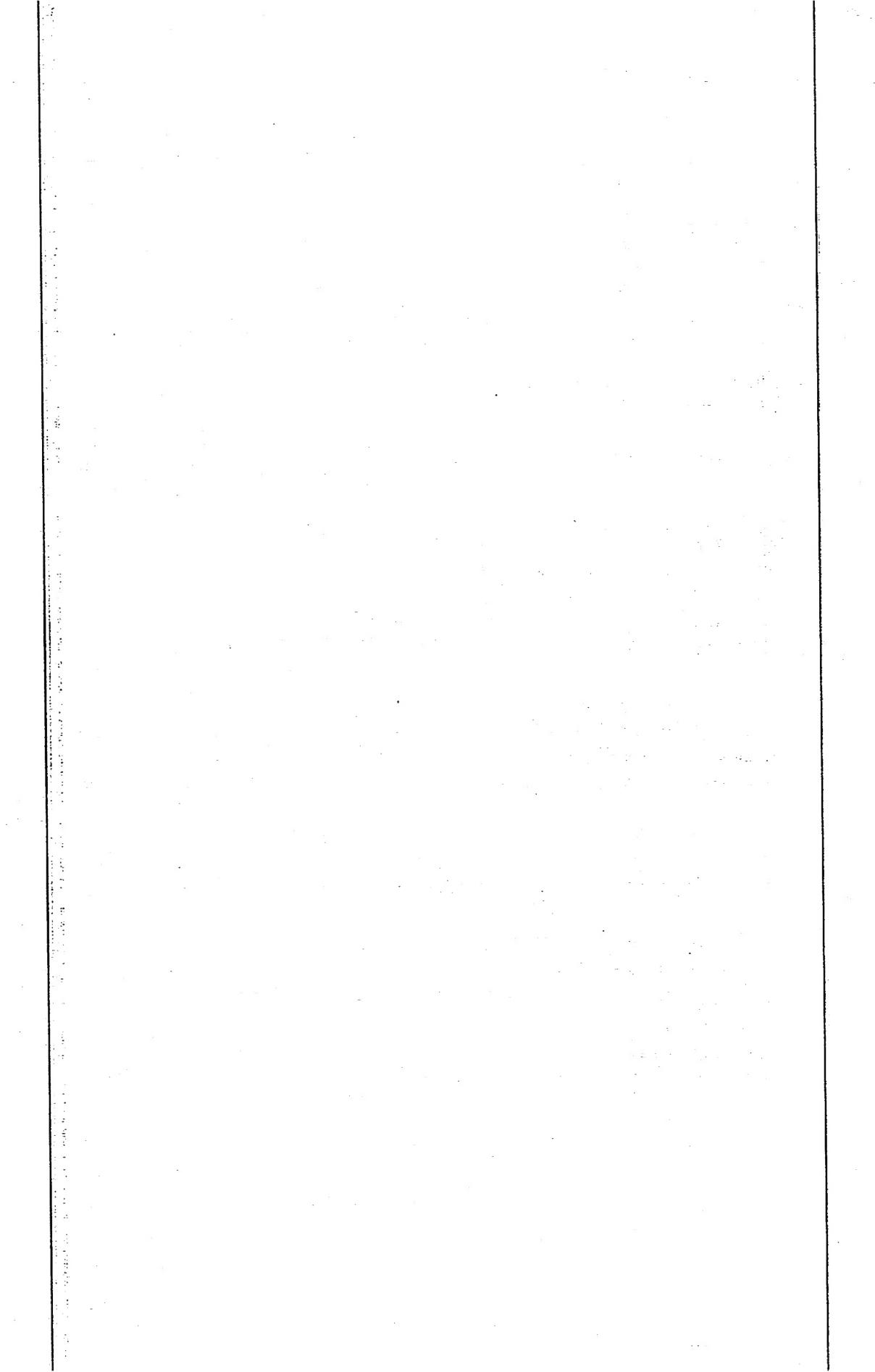
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# *Preface*

This is a very personal book because one's relationship to God and to others are very personal matters. Life decisions about values, motives, careers, and family reflect this intimate center of each person. At the same time, these life decisions are a central concern of the United Methodist Church because the future of the church depends heavily upon the quality of its leadership.

It is difficult to share this type of intensely personal experience through the printed page. The intent of the format and language of this book is to convey a warm, open, sensitive relationship; it is not an attempt to be falsely chummy or to talk down to the reader. The use of the second person and first person pronouns invites you to make this material your own. Perhaps you will find the "I" and "you" to be a helpful device for including your thoughts, feelings, and experiences in the process of inquiry.

The message of this book is equally for women and men. For this reason the expression "s/he" is used wherever "he/she" or "he or she" can be used. This will remind us that God loves both female and male and can serve effectively in the church's various ministries.

There are two purposes for this book. First, it is to enable all Christians to consider their part in the general ministry of the United Methodist Church as a Christian community and to offer mutual support to each other in this service of love.

Second, this book seeks to convey an emotional and intellectual understanding of the many forms God's ministry takes in the church and in the world. To this end perhaps you will be better able to support those persons who serve in the various forms of ministry recognized by the church.

This book is designed to strengthen you as Christ's disciple in the United Methodist Church as you learn more about ministry in today's world. The structure of this book lends itself to a series of study sessions in these or other settings:

1. In group study sessions for high school, college, young adult, and adult groups, in Sunday, weekend, and other settings.
2. For couples to read together, since career and family decisions are often closely inter-related.
3. With Committees on Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations and other local church groups who want to understand the meaning of and options for ministry in the United Methodist Church.

4. For individuals who are interested in clarifying their Christian vocation in the light of the opportunities for ministry.
5. For persons or groups considering the theological and psychological dimensions of career decisions, career changes, and vocational development.

God may be calling you to ministry in the United Methodist Church. As you study the many ways in which Christians can use their gifts and graces for ministry in our denomination, consider whether one of them might be a possible career option for you.

May God bless you as you grow in this exploration of God's ministry in our world today.

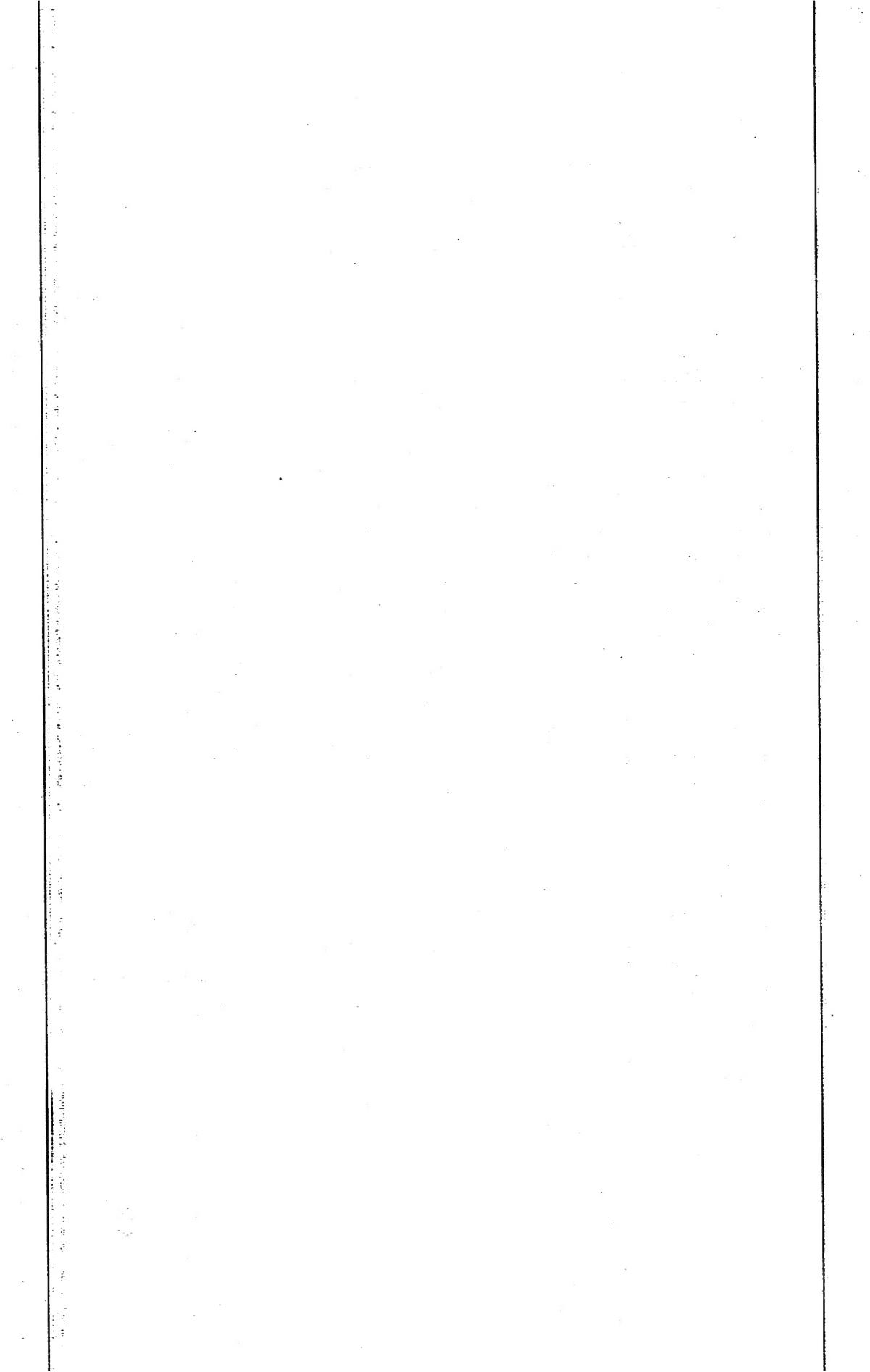
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## *Acknowledgments*

The second edition of *The Christian As Minister* not only examines ordained ministry as a vocational choice, but it also attempts to explore all the options for ministerial service in the United Methodist Church. Attention is therefore given to lay service, diaconal and ordained ministry, chaplaincy and campus ministry, consecrated ministries, and mission service.

The Rev. Robert F. Kohler, a director of the Division of Ordained Ministry, has coordinated this revision through the Enlistment Committee of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. We are grateful to Douglass E. Fitch who convened the committee and the divisional representatives for their careful writing, review, and preparation of the document: Patricia Barrett, Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries; Young Joon Cho, Division of Ordained Ministry; Joaquin Garcia, Division of Diaconal Ministry; and Helen Neinast, Division of Higher Education.

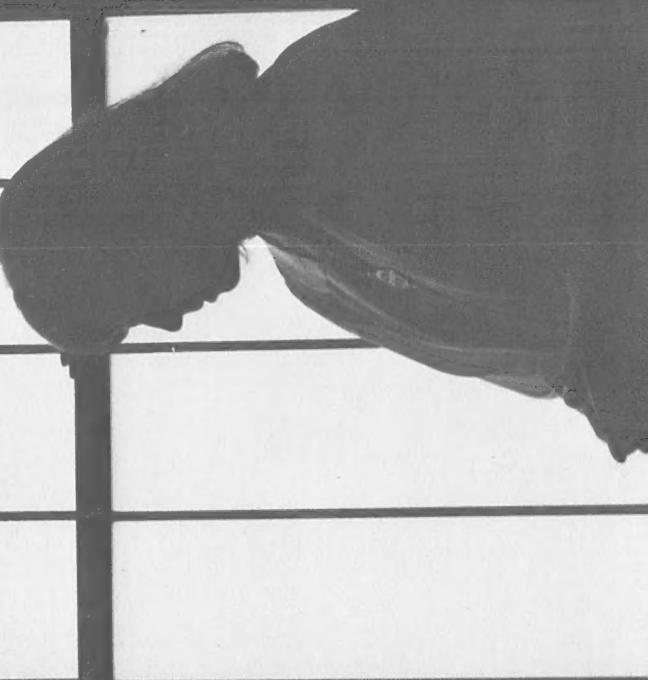
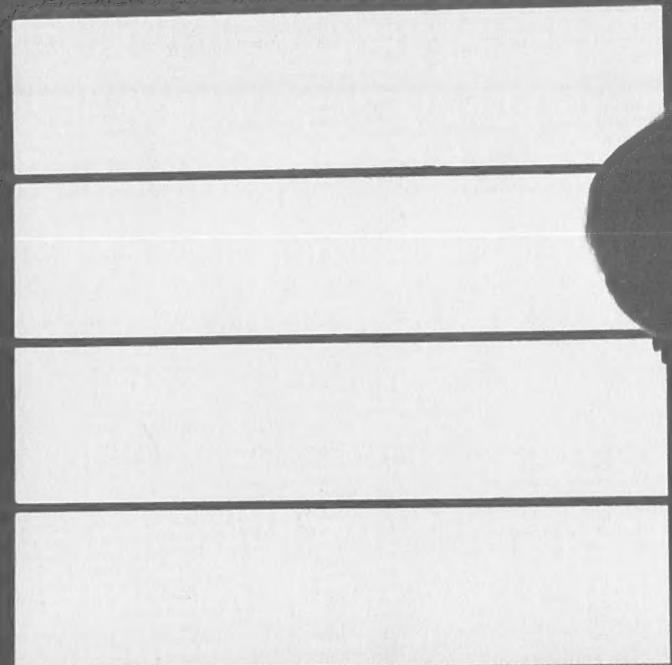
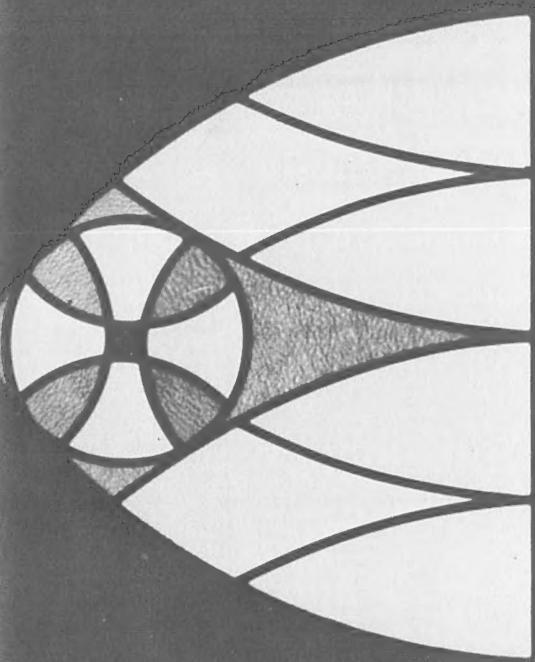
Our thanks are due also to Terri J. Hiers for her editorial assistance, Bruce Gore for the layout and cover design, and Dr. Richard A. Hunt, author of the first edition, many of whose valuable thoughts and ideas were retained in this revision.



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## PART I:

### *Servant Ministry*



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# *Introduction*

There is a “tale that is too good not to be true,” says Frederick Buechner. It is the story of the “overwhelming of tragedy by comedy, of darkness by light, of the ordinary by the extraordinary,” and “to dismiss it as untrue is to dismiss along with it that catch of the breath, that beat and lifting of the heart” which “is the deepest intuition of truth that we have.”<sup>1</sup>

The tale that is too good not to be true is the story of God’s ministry, God’s grace, and God’s love for creation. It is the story of the God of creation kneeling down in a cypress swamp toiling over a lump of clay like a mammy over a child. It is the story of the God of Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Miriam, Isaac, Ruth and Jacob leading the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, feeding them manna in the desert, and guiding them to the promised land. It is the story of a love for the world so great that Christ is sent to witness to and live out the promises of God’s love.

For the Christian, the ministry of God is made flesh in the story-living and story-telling of Jesus Christ. It is seen and heard through the drama of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, but this is not the end of the tale. All Christians are invited to participate in God’s ministry through Christ. No one is excluded from the task. Everyone is called upon to live out God’s story and witness to God’s love. Yet, is this not too great a task for every Christian to do? Is this not a tale too good to be true? Yes, BUT! While we do not possess the power to live out God’s story in ourselves, God’s graciousness is such that it grants us the power to be witnesses and servants of the story. It is therefore through the power of the Holy Spirit that all Christians are called upon to live out the gospel in their lives.

If you are wrestling with your call to participate in the story-living and story-telling of the gospel, some of your anxiety may be addressed by looking carefully at the record of Jesus’ struggle with his vocation and calling. There was a time in his life when Jesus did not know that he was to bear the history of God in a special way, a time when his vocation in life was not clearly understood. He had to discover who he was in relationship to God, and what it was that God intended for him to do. The agent of that discovery was the Holy Spirit which, in his baptism, revealed him to be the beloved Son of God and led him into the wilderness to struggle with what identity with God meant in the work he would do.

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1. Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1977), 98.

## REFLECTION 1

Study the Scriptures which follow. With which elements in the vocational struggle of Jesus can you most identify? Which elements seem most foreign to you?

And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

—Matthew 3:16-17, Revised Standard Version

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give his angels charge of you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him.

—Matthew 4:1-11, RSV

\* \* \*

As you reflect on the baptism and wilderness journey of Jesus, you might assume that his struggle was not real and his temptations were not live options, but this was simply not so. Jesus, like all of us, could have chosen to limit his vocational choices to those which gave him personal satisfaction. He could have catered to his physical or psychological needs by turning stones into bread or by throwing himself off the pinnacle and challenging God to come to the rescue. He could have pursued a need for power by ruling over the kingdoms of the earth as emperor of the world. But his vocation was not to service his physical or psychological needs. Though real options, they were not to be a part of his vocation.

Jesus was called, like all of God's people, to be a servant of God's story. Indeed he was to be the very incarnation of that narrative. Through his life, his death, his teachings on earth, and his work in the resurrection, he is and was faithful to the story of God in every way. Rejected by his neighbors at home, he moved to the hillsides and shorelines of Galilee to tell the story of God's grace, proclaiming "good news to the poor", "release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind." Faced with misunderstanding and even betrayal by the disciples, Jesus continued to teach them and lead them to a more complete vision of what servanthood to the gospel meant. Confronted with a choice between life and death on a cross, he chose death rather than betray his responsibility for witnessing to and living out the story of God.

## REFLECTION 2

Even after Jesus had clarified his calling by making the vocational choices which allowed him to participate in God's story, that calling was not always affirmed by the people of God. Listen to this account of his ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth. Again, to which elements in this event can you relate?

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the sabbath day. And he stood up to read; and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke well of him, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; and they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself; what we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here also in your own country.'" And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country. . . ." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and put him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But passing through the midst of them he went away.

—Luke 4:16-24; 28-30, RSV

Although the vocation of Jesus Christ was and is radically different than your vocation; nevertheless, there is a relationship between his vocation and yours. It is not accidental that you can identify with elements in Jesus' baptism, wilderness journey, and ministry. His struggle with vocational choice was as real as yours. In a way, your vocation in life grows out of his, because, through the Holy Spirit, Christ is inviting you to share in God's story by witnessing to its reality in your life and living it out through your actions. Like Christ, and the Apostles, and the host of saints who have gone before you in the faith, you are called to discover the meaning of your vocation in the telling and living out of the gospel. While the ways in which you tell it and the service you render in obedience to the will of God will differ from all others who surround you in the faith, you will find in that vocation, and only there, a true sense of who you are in relationship to God and who it is that you were meant to become. This is the story of your life too good not to be true.

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# 1

## The Christian As Witness and Servant

As [Jesus] walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

—Matthew 4:18-22, RSV

Jesus calls women to be a part of his ministry just as surely as he calls men. Matthew reveals that there were many women at the crucifixion ". . . who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. . . ." (Matthew 27:55, RSV) Who can presume that their calling, or following, or ministering was of any different quality than that of the other disciples? It was on the ministry of these very women that Matthew later focused in his account of the resurrection. Jesus appeared first to the women and he instructed them to go to the disciples and tell them that he was risen from the dead and would appear to them as well. Here, at last, any distinction between the ministry of men and the ministry of women collapses into the reality that all Christians are called upon to witness to their experience of the risen Christ.

—Robert F. Kohler

And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal.

—Luke 9:1-2, RSV

With these words, the gospel writers describe the calling of their friends to be disciples of Christ. The key words in each account are "follow me". Follow me, and be obedient to my will. Follow me by preaching, teaching, and healing in my name. Follow me as one who serves the gospel.



Today, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ calls you to follow him as a servant of the gospel. Like the disciples of old, he calls you, not because of your wisdom and strength, nor because of your gifts and skill, but because, as a part of his body, he wants you to share in his vocation to witness to and be a part of God's ministry. For Peter and Andrew and James and John, that call meant leaving their boats and nets behind and following Jesus. For Mary and Martha and Joanna and Mary Magdalene, that call meant stepping out on a journey of faith without reliance on the securities of life, such as they were. For some it has meant complete dependence on the providence of God. To one would-be disciple, Jesus said, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head." To another who wished to take time to bury his father he said, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. . . ." And to a third who only wished to say farewell to those at home he said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:58-62, RSV) Each of these encounters, in their own way, illustrates the fact that the first step in fulfilling your vocation is a willingness to accept Christ's invitation to live out the gospel. It is obedience, plain and simple. Until you accept that invitation through the power of the Holy Spirit, until you have put aside all that prohibits you from the giving of yourself in radical obedience to the call of Christ, you will not come to know the nature of your role as God's story-teller or story-liver, or your true vocation in life.

That Christ calls us all to witness and service cannot be denied. However, the kind of witness and the kind of service to which God is calling us is a far more difficult question to answer. This is the question of “vocation”, the place where God’s will for our lives and our radical obedience meet in the fulfillment of our purpose for being. How do we know the calling we hear is of God? Frederick Buechner gives us this insight.

### Vocation

It comes from the Latin *vocare*, to call, and means the work a man [or woman] is called to by God.

There are all different kinds of voices calling you to all different kinds of work, and the problem is to find out which is the voice of God rather than of Society, say, or the Superego, or Self-Interest.

By and large a good rule for finding out is this. The kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work (a) that you need most to do and (b) that the world most needs to have done. If you really get a kick out of your work, you’ve presumably met requirement (a), but if your work is writing TV deodorant commercials, the chances are you’ve missed requirement (b). On the other hand, if your work is being a doctor in a leper colony, you have probably met requirement (b), but if most of the time you’re bored and depressed by it, the chances are you have not only bypassed (a) but probably aren’t helping your patients much either.

Neither the hair shirt nor the soft berth will do. The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and world’s deep hunger meet.<sup>2</sup>

These words may be a helpful way to begin thinking about your vocation, your calling in life. God does call each of us to use our gifts in service to the world. And that call, as Buechner says, fills us with a deep inner joy because it is the only thing we can do which will satisfy our hunger to be about God’s work in the world. Likewise it is the one thing we can do which will satisfy one of the hungers of the world. The need for Christians to find their meaning and purpose in life through vocation is great, for the world’s hungers are many. There are physical hungers for food and spiritual hungers for understanding. People are hungry for freedom, for justice, for truth, for a kind word, for a sign of hope, for a vision that lifts them beyond the everydayness of life. Billie Dregan works in the sanitation department of a large city. Susan Taylor is a physician. Bae Chongho is president of a university. Pablo Rincon is a research chemist working on problems of birth defects. Betty Noveroske is a U.S. Congressperson concerned about peaceful international relationships. Joe Moore is a clerk in a grocery supermarket. Jayne Henderson and James Wolfe are on the staff of a United Methodist Church. Anabelle Correy works with prisoners at the state

2. Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1973), 95.

penitentiary. Gary McDaniel is an oil field worker. Tonie Delano sells electronic equipment. Ben Anderson is a counselor. Mac Taylor is a full-time househusband and father. Some of these persons are young; others are nearing retirement. Some are married and have children; some are divorced and caring for their families alone; others are single and maintain a family of one. Some have advanced degrees; others are working toward a high school diploma. They come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds and live in different parts of the country. All of these persons have something in common. They are called to be God's people. They are baptized and united in the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit. Because they remember their baptism, they follow Jesus Christ, who sends them into the world as witnesses. They turn to God in praise and, through Christ, they turn to serve their neighbors in need. They confess their faith; they proclaim their hope; and they struggle with those who are oppressed for the freedom and dignity promised in the reign of God. In the shop, the club, or the polling booth—in the family, the church, or the crowd—they seek ways to live out God's story through witness and service and love.

God has given each of these persons complementary gifts through the Holy Spirit. All are responsible for sharing their gifts with the whole people of God through acts of service within the community of faith and within the world. All communicate the gospel through their actions and their words. The Holy Spirit has given to some gifts of speaking, healing, praying, teaching, learning, and serving. To others it has given gifts of leading and following, seeing and hearing. All have been called to discover their gifts in the context of Christian community. Each has struggled (and continues to struggle) with the meaning of the gifts they have received for the building up of the church and service to the world which God so loves. In short, each of these persons is called to be a minister, a representative of God in Christ, for service to the gospel and to the world. This is their inheritance through baptism. The *Discipline* of our church puts it this way:

✓ The heart of Christian ministry is Christ's ministry of outreach love. Christian ministry is the expression of the mind and mission of Christ by a community of Christians that demonstrates a common life of gratitude and devotion, witness and service, celebration and discipleship. All Christians are called to this ministry of servanthood in the world to the glory of God and for human fulfillment. The forms of this ministry are diverse in locale, in interest, and in denominational accent, yet always catholic in spirit and outreach.

The Church as the community of the new covenant has participated in Christ's ministry of grace across the years and around the world. It stretches out to human needs wherever love and service may convey God's love and ours. The outreach of such ministries knows no limits. . . . This means that



all Christians are called to minister wherever Christ would have them serve and witness in deeds and words that heal and free.

—Pars. 104 and 105, 1984 *Discipline*

Serving and witnessing in deeds and words that heal and free—this is the essence of Christian ministry in the world. This is the essence of what it means to approach one's job, one's career, one's vocation as a person who is a follower of Christ.

Bill McElvaney is someone who struggles with living out one's vocation—no matter what it might be—as a Christian. An administrator in a seminary, Bill tells this story about a worship experience that re-focused his thinking about what he does day in and day out:

. . . We have chapel services on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Often these are rich experiences of worship. For me a recent Eucharist service turned into a feast of hearing and receiving in a totally unexpected manner. . . On this occasion. . . a deeper vision of what it means to be an. . . administrator came to me as I was sitting in the pew looking at the elements on the communion table. . .

I began to realize that I was being asked the question, "What does it mean for the desk in my office to become that communion table?" I began to see one superimposed on the other, so that the elements rested on the united form of the two. The loaf and the chalice touched everything on my desk and all the transactions that came across it.

I knew that sitting behind a Eucharistic desk, I would never administer the seminary in quite the same way as before. I knew that every administrative detail and decision would in some way represent the hurts and the hopes of human beings, that the brokenness and wholeness of life would be at stake on this desk become table, that even roof repairs and HEW forms would point beyond themselves to the total task of the Risen Lord and the Easter People.<sup>3</sup>

That is the question that comes to each of us as Christian ministers. What does it mean for the desk in my office to become that communion table? What does it mean for the pick-up I drive on my rounds in the oil field to become a place of communion? What does it mean for the students that I teach to become people whom I serve in the name of God? What does it mean for the prisoners I guard every day at the state penitentiary to become my brothers and sisters in Christ?

Each of us is a minister to the world in Christ's name, whether our work involves people or things, whether we work alone or with others, whether we work for money or as a volunteer, whether our work binds up the world's hurts or calls the world to new hope and vision. Any work that binds up the world's hurts or calls the world to new hope and vision, any work done in Christ's name on Christ's behalf, is a witness to Christ's continuing presence in the world.

As a Christian, you are called to be a minister of Christ. In yourself this is an impossible task, but in the power of the Holy Spirit all things are possible. The only question that remains is this: What kind of ministry is God calling you to that will meet your deepest need and the world's deepest hunger? What work would God have you do in the name of Christ, for the sake of the world?

### REFLECTION 3: *The Social Principles*

What the world needs most can, in part, be seen through the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church. As you read through these principles found in Part III of the 1984 *Discipline*, what is it that you need to do most in response to the needs of the world?

Read, in a meditative way, the Social Creed printed below. Let it be

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3. William K. McElvaney, *The People of God in Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), 117.

your prayer for the need of the world. Let it evoke in you thoughts of the different ways you can respond to God's call.

### Our Social Creed

We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God's handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its preservation, enhancement, and faithful use by humankind.

We joyfully receive, for ourselves and others, the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage, and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and those with handicapping conditions; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the good of themselves and others, and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to freedom for all peoples, and to the rule of justice and law among nations.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God's Word in human affairs, and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world. Amen.

### REFLECTION 4: *Callings*

Most people in the course of their lives attempt to address the issue Frederick Buechner raises of the world's need and their call to respond to that need. Below are some reflections on that question. What does each evoke in you?

Callings are strange things. I think I have heard many voices in many times and places, but it may be that I have heard only One.

—Vincent Harding, "I Hear Them . . . Calling (And I Know What It Means)" in *Callings!*, edited by James Y. Holloway and Will D. Campbell, (Ramsey, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1974), 69.

Faith is a gift of God. Without it there would be no life. And our work, to be fruitful, and to be all for God, and to be beautiful, has to be built on faith—faith in Christ, who has said, "I was hungry, I was naked, I was

sick, and I was homeless, and you ministered to me." On these words of Christ all our work is based . . .

We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not in the ocean, I think the ocean would be less because of the missing drop . . .

To show great love for God and our neighbor we need not do great things. It is how much love we put in the doing that makes our offering Something Beautiful for God.

—Mother Teresa of Calcutta, *A Gift for God*,  
(New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1975), 15, 40, 69.

Once again, during a private conversation, I heard a familiar question: How can I be myself? How can I fulfill myself? Those questions preoccupy some people to the point of anguish.

I remember what Jonah once said, talking of his encounter with Jesus: "He does not say, be yourself; he says, be with me." How right he is! Christ does not tell us, "Find yourself" or "Run after yourself." He says, "You, follow me."

When the Gospel asks people to be themselves and develop their gifts and talents a hundredfold, it is not in order to serve their own ends, it is to serve others.

In the Gospel, to be oneself means searching deeply until the irreplaceable gift given to each one of us is revealed. Through that special gift, unlike anyone else's, each person is brought to fulfillment in God.

So keep silence, withdraw into the desert, if only once in a lifetime, and discover that gift . . .

—Brother Roger, Prior of Taizé, *A Life We Never Dared Hope For*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), 41.

People have asked me why I chose to be a dancer. I did not choose to be a dancer. I was chosen to be a dancer, and with that you live all your life. When any young student asks me, "Do you think I should be a dancer?" I always say, "If you ask me that question, no! Only if there is only one way to make life vivid for yourself, and for others, should you embark upon such a career."

—Martha Graham, quoted in William K. McElvaney's *The People of God in Ministry*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), 23.

The first ministers were the twelve disciples. There is no evidence that Jesus chose them because they were brighter or nicer than other people. In fact the New Testament record suggests that they were continually missing the point, jockeying for position and, when the chips were down, interested in nothing so much as saving their own skins. Their sole qualification seems to have been their initial willingness to rise to their feet when Jesus said, "Follow me". As St. Paul put it later, ". . . God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. . . ." (1 Corinthians 1:27, RSV)

When Jesus sent the twelve out into the world, his instructions were simple. He told them to "preach the kingdom of God and to heal" (Luke 9:2, RSV), with the implication that to do either right was in effect to do both. Fortunately for the world in general and the church in particular, the ability to do them is not dependent on either moral character or I.Q. To do them in the name of Christ is to be a minister.

—Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1973), 62-63.

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## 2

### The Christian As Servant and Leader

For many who seek to be disciples of Christ, vocation is found in some form of leadership in the church. For some this may take the form of volunteer service; for others, in order that they may give their entire vocational time to such leadership, employment in one of the various professional ministries the church provides. In many ways the church volunteer reflects the forms of servanthood envisioned by Christ. Most church volunteers are faithful workers who give their time and energy to tasks of preaching, teaching, worship, praise, administration, and maintenance without recognition, honor, or reward. You probably are or have been counted among their numbers. Though some perform their work primarily out of a sense of duty, others find volunteer service within the church to be more significant than anything else they do in life. It is vocation.

Ann was a young woman entering a career in the publishing industry when she stopped in the busyness of her life to ask why it was that she found more pleasure in her work as a church volunteer than her career as an associate editor of a small professional journal. She was forced to review what she was doing when her father simply observed that she was putting a lot of energy into planning for a mission program. That was all she needed to acknowledge that she was enjoying volunteer work and was enjoying it more than anything else in life. Though publishing was her career, for that moment of her life, volunteer service was her vocation. It may be yours as well.

Some persons who once found satisfaction as church volunteers now find their vocation in local church staff positions. They are Christian educators, community developers, business administrators, pastors, counselors, directors of music, or one of a number of other professionals needed in church leadership. Other volunteers now find their vocation in the context of the church's ministry in the world. They are doctors, chaplains, teachers, pastors, counselors, or administrators. They are technicians, accountants, researchers, or other specialists employed in the mission of the church. As you read through this book, you will become more aware of the wide range of leadership opportunities open to you in our church. As you become familiar with these options you may wish to talk with a pastor, campus minister, chaplain, or diaconal minister about the different avenues for Christian service and the kind of support you can anticipate as you seek a place to fulfill your vocation in the ministries of the church.



## REFLECTION 5

If your sense of vocation is moving you in the direction of leadership within the church, some reflection on the servant ministry of Christ would be appropriate. How does the servant ministry of Jesus inform your vocational choice?

During the Last Supper, Luke tells us that the disciples began to argue with each other over who was the greatest, and Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For which is the greater, one who sits at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at table? But I am among you as one who serves."

—Luke 22:24-27, RSV

Just to be sure no one missed the point, Jesus ". . .rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. . . . When he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, 'Do you

know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."

—John 13:3-5; 12:15, RSV

\* \* \*

Jesus came to serve, and so must all who would assume positions of professional church leadership. It is because service is an essential characteristic of the ministry of the church that the biblical word for service (*diakonia*) is frequently reflected in their descriptions and forms. Deacon, deaconess, diaconate, and diaconal remind us of the role Christ would have us assume in the professional leadership opportunities available as vocational choices in the United Methodist Church.

### Diaconal Ministry

Among the options for vocational service in United Methodism is service as a diaconal minister. As old as the New Testament, the office of diaconal minister has been deliberately designed to allow for meeting specific needs in both church and world.

Diaconal ministers are called to specialized ministries of service, justice, and love within local congregations and in the wider world. Servant ministry must always involve a concern for justice as well as a love for persons. Diaconal ministers focus their service through a variety of ministries, such as, administration, education, evangelism, music, health ministries, and community development—to the local congregation and the wider community. Christ's service to humankind and the Church's responsibility for continuing that service in the world are both symbolized and enabled especially, but not exclusively, in diaconal ministry. Diaconal ministry exists to intensify and make more effective the self-understanding of the whole people of God as servants in Christ's name.

—Par. 109, 1984 *Discipline*

The needs of society (and, therefore, the church's need to minister) require new or changing emphases. The office of diaconal minister in the United Methodist Church has its origin in the biblical and historical Christian heritage, in theological understandings of ministry, and in the outreach of the church both within and beyond the local congregation. As such, the office is an integral part of the total ministry of the church with a recognized relationship to the annual conference.

The New Testament witness of Jesus Christ makes clear that the primary form of his ministry, in God's name, was that of service in the world (*diakonia*). All who follow Jesus have a share in this ministry. Baptism places upon each of us the gift of witness and service in the name of Christ. Yet the church, also, affirms that particular persons are called for ministries of leadership within the body to help the general ministry of the church to be engaged in and fulfill its ministry of service.

The purpose of such leadership, then, is participating in the equipping of the general ministry of the church, to the end that the whole church may be built up as the Body of Christ for the work of ministry and to be in service to the world. Diaconal ministry is not a substitute for the servant responsibility of all members of the general ministry. Rather it exists to intensify and make that ministry more effective.

Consecration to the office of diaconal ministry is a recognition by the church of God's call to servanthood, the individual's response to that call, and the authorization of such persons for designated ministries of service and justice. Diaconal ministers commit themselves to seek avenues of growth in order to serve effectively.

### **Ordained Ministry**

Another career option you may wish to explore is ordained ministry. While ordained ministry is rooted in the calling and sending of the apostles, its history must be traced through the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who have been called to proclaim publicly our fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ. The church has never been without persons ordained by God with specific authority and responsibility for the telling and living out of God's story expressed through Jesus Christ.

The ordained ministers are called to specialized ministries of Word, Sacrament, and order. Through these distinctive functions ordained ministers devote themselves wholly to the work of the Church and to the upbuilding of the general ministry. They do this through careful study of the Scripture and its faithful interpretation, through effective proclamation of the gospel and responsible administration of the Sacraments, through diligent pastoral leadership of their congregations for fruitful discipleship, and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing beyond the congregation in the local community and to the ends of the earth. The ordained ministry is defined by its intentionally representative character, by its passion for the hallowing of life, and by its concern to link all local ministries with the widest boundaries of the Christian community.

—Par. 110, 1984 Discipline



Ordained ministers serve the church in a wide variety of settings. They are pastors, chaplains, teachers, missionaries, administrators, campus ministers, counselors, etc. They serve in local churches, hospitals, prisons, the armed services, colleges, seminaries, counseling centers, and the boards and agencies of the church. Though possessing gifts and graces for ministry nearly as diverse as those of the laity, their responsibility for telling the story and administering the sacraments, and their ordination for this task by the Holy Spirit is the source of their uniqueness in the body of Christ.

### Mission Personnel

Yet another option for ministry open to you is service among the mission personnel of the General Board of Global Ministries. Church and community workers, home and foreign mission personnel, and deaconesses are commissioned by the GBGM to serve in programs of mission throughout the United States and around the world. They work in institutions, churches, and homes; they serve in missionary conferences and other Methodist Churches; they are in urban and rural settings; and they use the skills they have developed in such fields as medicine, teaching, new church development, community organization, administration, pastoral ministries, nutrition, counseling, agriculture, and the list goes on. Lay persons, diaconal, and ordained ministers share in these mission tasks. Perhaps it is here that your sense of vocation will find fulfillment.

## Leadership as Servanthood

If your vision of Christian vocation includes some form of leadership within the church, you must not forget—you who would be greatest in the reign of God—that Jesus described the essential ingredient of church leadership as servanthood. He came as one who serves. Robert K. Greenleaf describes it this way:

The idea of *The Servant as Leader* came out of reading Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East*. In this story we see a band of men on a mythical journey, probably Hesse's own journey. The central figure of the story is Leo who accompanies the party as the *servant* who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song. He is a person of extraordinary presence. All goes well until Leo disappears. Then the group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot make it without the servant Leo. The narrator, one of the party, after some years of wandering finds Leo and is taken into the Order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that Leo, whom he had known first as *servant* was in fact the titular head of the Order, its guiding spirit a great and noble *leader* . . . this story clearly says that *the great leader is seen as servant first*, and that simple fact is the key to greatness.<sup>4</sup>

The role of leader as servant seems so obvious, and yet it is a truth which is easily forgotten in the ministries of the church. Issues of salary, housing, and status in the organization of the church often obscure one's commitment to the servant task. Pride in one's capabilities and inflated opinions of self worth often mislead persons with leadership potential into believing that the church or society owe us something, when in fact the servant role requires sacrificial giving without any assurance of social or economic reward. In the light of such tendencies, it is good that you clarify your vision of Christian vocation now, before investing any more time or resources into preparing for a career in the ministry of the church. If you expect anything more than the joy of giving yourself to meet the needs of the people of the world—if you rejoice in authority, power, or wealth—you will probably not find your vocation in the ministries of the church. But if you seek to serve in meaningful ways where you are needed, God will reward you, not necessarily with wealth, power, and prestige, but with the satisfaction of knowing you have served well.

## REFLECTION 6

The servant leader is servant first—as Leo was portrayed. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. The conscious choice

4. Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 7.

brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is *leader* first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such it will be a later choice to serve—after leadership is established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.

The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's high priority needs are being served. The best test but difficult to administer is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? *And*, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?<sup>5</sup>

\* \* \*

How do you see yourself—servant-first or leader-first? How does the church see you? The church cannot be the church without servant-first leadership through the church volunteer, the diaconal and ordained minister, or the mission personnel of the General Board of Global Ministries.

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5. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 13-14.

# 3

## The Decision for Servant Ministry

After we hear God's call to be a Christian, our basic response is to become an active participant in the covenant community—the church, the People of God. Having made that commitment to God and the church, our next step is to understand more fully the particular ways in which God is calling us to serve. We try to hear God's personal call to us.

*How will you hear and respond to God's call in your life?*

As a beginning point, remember that vocation is not first what you *do* in response to God's call, but rather it is who you *are* in that response. We start by responding to God's call to be a Christian. This act of response changes our lives. When we acknowledge God as creator, redeemer, and sustainer, we become new creatures. And consequently our actions become reflections of our relationship with God. Who we have become, therefore, makes a difference in what we do and how we live. So, we move and grow in order to incarnate that response in our lives—to make that response visible and real.

### REFLECTION 7: Who Am I In Relationship to God?

1. How do I identify God's presence in my life? In the world?
2. Am I fully committed to God? How do I express this?
3. How can I use my career to express God's love in today's world?
4. How is God's purpose (will, intention) related to my career decisions?

\* \* \*

A second important point is that your vocation is not necessarily the job you have. Your job is a major part of your life, especially in terms of the time you commit to it. Yet it is still only a part of your life—not the whole. We have come to expect too much from our jobs or careers, as if our work were the source of our meaning. Therefore, be open to the multitude of ways in which you can live out (incarnate) your response to God.

## REFLECTION 8: *What Is Success In Life?*

- 1.** What makes my life worthwhile? What keeps me going?
- 2.** How do I define success in a career? In life?
- 3.** What rewards or results do I most want from my career?
- 4.** What do I want to accomplish in my life?
- 5.** How does my commitment to Christ relate to my success in what I hope to accomplish?

\* \* \*

Third, do not be anxious to eliminate your possibilities too quickly, or to assume that certain vocations are not for you. John Wesley spoke of the world as his parish and that must also be the context for our decision-making. By arbitrarily rejecting this work or that setting, we may be missing God's call. As Christians we are called to minister in the world, for God is present everywhere, and there is no withdrawal from that ministry. Therefore, be open to all the possibilities and places and examine your vocation in the light of your interests, talents, and the needs for ministry.

## REFLECTION 9: *What Would I Like to Do?*

- 1.** What concerns me most about today's world? What would I change if I had opportunity to do so?
- 2.** Which fields do I know most about? What would I like to study?
- 3.** What abilities could I develop if I decide to work at it?
- 4.** What are the three things I would most like to accomplish in my lifetime? In the next year?

\* \* \*

Finally, understand that your decisions are made in the context of relationships—your relationship with God, your relationships with others, your relationship with the world, and your place in God's creation as a child of God.

We read in the Bible of persons who heard God's call in their lives (Samuel, Mary, Jonah, Ruth). Can we become aware of God's call today? Emphatically yes! But first, we must decide that we want to hear God's call. Then we must learn how to hear it. That means that we must practice our relationship with God through prayer, praise, study, and reflection. We often miss God's call because we have failed to develop our abilities to hear.



Once we have chosen to hear the call and have learned how to have a lively, growing, and living relationship with God, we must search actively for that call. God speaks to us in many ways and through many signs. As we move to clarify God's call and intention for our lives, we need to make use of the resources around us. We need not make our decision in a vacuum, but rather within the covenant community to which we have committed ourselves. One of the places you experience this covenant community is the local church of which you are a part.

One way is to talk with others, such as your pastor or other persons in the congregation. Discuss your search with them; ask how they see you. Don't limit your questions to those in leadership positions. There are many people who see your gifts. What talents and abilities do they find in you? What impressions do they have of you in particular vocational areas? Where do they see your strengths? Your weaknesses? By asking for this kind of feedback, you are not trying to have someone else tell you what to do. Rather you are using the covenant community as a sounding board or as a mirror—a way to become more sensitive to God's call to you.

The church is the community which can nurture and support you as you clarify your continuing understanding of God's call to you. This is where you can receive feedback, test your conclusions about yourself and your ministry, receive support and direction for your vocation.

## REFLECTION 10: *How Do I Relate to Others?*

1. What kind of persons do I most enjoy? Most dislike? Why?
2. How do others see me? Do I like or agree with the perceptions?
3. How do I deal with persons who have authority over me, such as employers, group leaders, teachers, or governing authorities?
4. What happens when other persons disappoint me? How do I react?
5. Do I prefer being with people, or being alone? When?
6. Do I feel that certain relatives or friends expect me to enter a particular career or do certain things? Is this encouraging or oppressive to me?

\* \* \*

Your primary decision is to be open to God's call and God's work through your life. Once you have made that choice, that becomes the primary criteria by which you evaluate remaining vocational decision points. The following are some suggested guidelines for your decision-making:

### I. *Identify your talents and skills*

As we have already said, other persons can be helpful resources in this area. In addition, there are many standard vocational tests which can help you identify your particular skills and abilities. Personality inventories can clarify your tendencies and preferred style of work. Use all the resources available, not to provide an instant answer, but rather to help you understand who you are and who you can become.

## REFLECTION 11: *What Are My Talents and Skills?*

 1. What do I feel good about doing, in the sense of knowing I can do it well? What strengths and resources do I have?

2. Am I able to lead groups to complete a task? Can I keep harmony in a group while we accomplish the task?
3. In which school subjects have I done my best work? Which subjects were unusually difficult? Why?
4. What awards have I earned? When? What are my talents?
5. What have others told me about my abilities? Were they correct in their judgment? When?

\* \* \*

## II. *Identify your needs*

Be honest with yourself. You must care for your own personal needs in order to be effective in ministry. Perhaps that is why Jesus affirmed the teaching, "You shall love the Lord your God. . .and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27, RSV). It is not selfish to care for your needs, but essential that you balance love of God and service to others with care for yourself. To deny attending to what is important to you may in the end limit your ability to serve God and minister to the needs of God's people. A person who wants to be a counselor but is uncomfortable working with people on a one-to-one basis more than likely will not be effective in counseling. A person who likes people but dislikes organizational detail probably will not be effective as a business administrator. One who finds it difficult to work with people in authority may find it difficult to accept the supervision required in the United Methodist Church. If you need to relate to people in an informal way; if you depend on rules and policies to get you through; if your vocation needs to include service to the poor in the city, country, or world, acknowledge that. If you need to care for your husband or your daughter in school; if you're wedded to your home or your job; if you require stability or need a creative change; take responsibility for your needs. Take responsibility for your physical and emotional needs as well. It will not be helpful to you or those you wish to serve if you have a chronic condition which is not addressed through proper medical care, diet, or exercise. For the sake of the gospel of Christ, care also for your thoughts and emotions. If you need to learn more to be effective in your ministry, seek out the education you need. If feelings or emotions interfere with your relationships with others, recognize your need and address it by seeking out help. Know what is important to you and claim that as part of your self-identity. Your social, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs must be cared for if you are to effectively serve God and minister to the world.

### REFLECTION 12: *What Are My Needs?*

1. Do I enjoy working independently, or do I prefer having a supervisor?
2. What values and considerations are important to me as I set goals for myself?
3. Do I enjoy being with a large group, with a few close friends, or being alone? When? How often do I enjoy each?
4. What kinds of people do I prefer if I have a choice?



5. Do I like to be the leader, the follower, or a member of the team?
6. How do I cope with emotions relating to hunger, sex, power, loneliness, frustration, or leadership?
7. What are the relationships between my feelings and my physical functioning? For example, does anxiety produce headaches, nausea, or other physical reactions?
8. Can I easily and appropriately express both positive and negative feelings, such as joy, sadness, appreciation, anger?
9. Am I afraid of any of my feelings?
10. How do I react and respond to the feelings that others express?
11. What are my limitations or deficiencies? How do I feel about them? Which ones do I need to overcome? Why?

\* \* \*

### *III. Explore your options*

Part II of this book describes a variety of settings for ministry in the United Methodist Church. You may wish to begin your exploration of the various opportunities for service by reading through this descriptive material. Once you have done this, you may find it useful to talk and visit with persons in a variety of ministry settings. Listen to their stories. Reflect on

how you might fit in this place or that ministry. Your pastor or campus minister can help you identify persons in the settings you wish to explore. Another excellent way to explore options is to become involved as a volunteer in an environment that could become a career setting. This provides an opportunity to test the reality of that environment for a career and evaluate your abilities in that context.

### REFLECTION 13: *What Are My Options?*

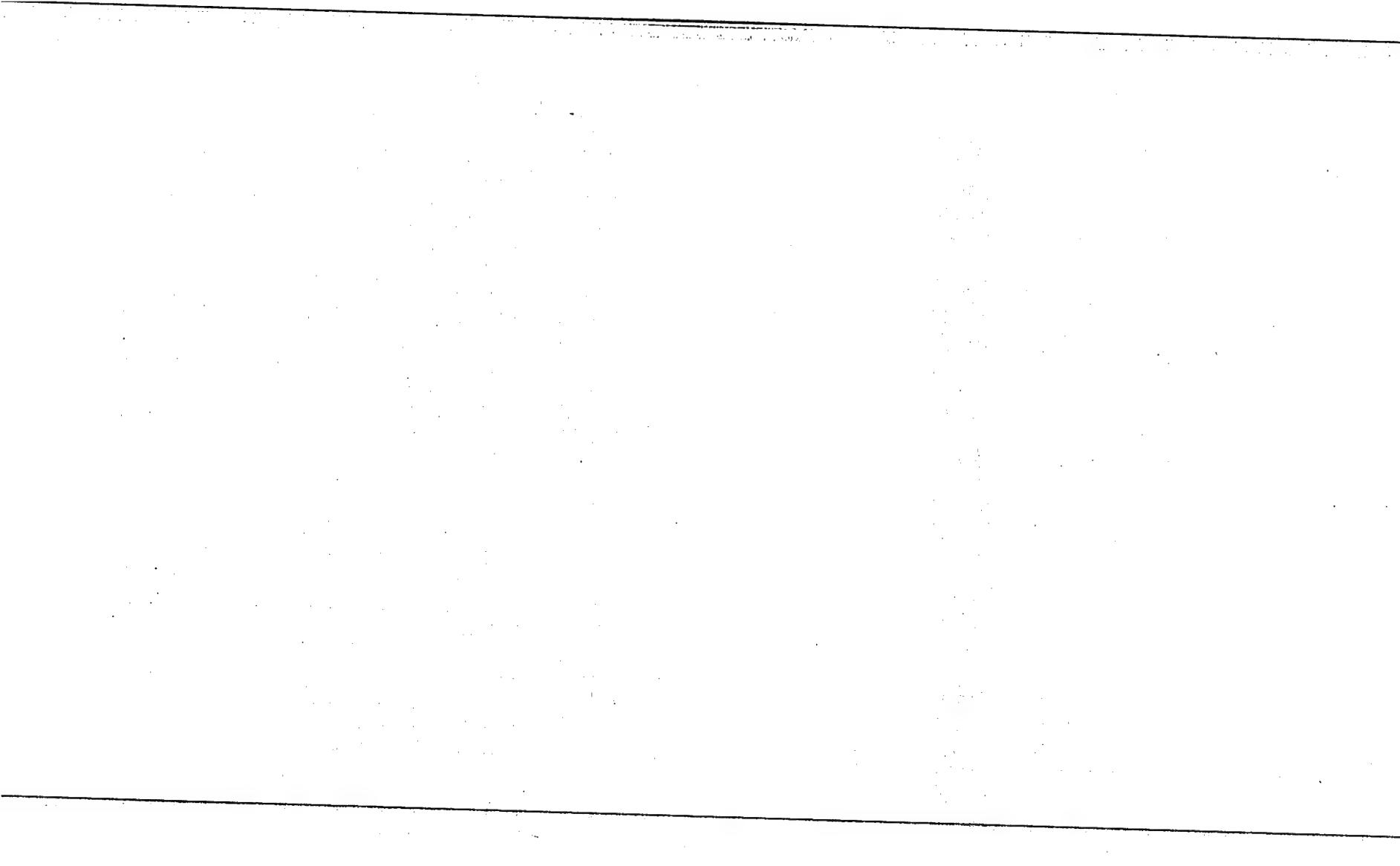
- Q 1. What rewards or results do I most want from my career?
2. If I could shape a career to fit me, what would it be?
3. What would I like to be doing five or ten years from now?
4. If I unexpectedly inherited a large amount of money, what would I do with it? Why?
5. If I had only one week (or one year) to live, what would I do in that time?

\* \* \*

Now that you have clarified your skills and needs and have explored your options, you are in a position to focus and move toward a more particular acting out of your response to God's call. The following chapters will help you identify the steps to take into specific functions and settings for ministry.

The keys to this process are **openness** and **continuity**. You have identified your talents and your skills. But having done this once does not mean that you have accomplished that task. This identification of skills, talents, and needs is a continuing one. You need to be open to the new things you learn about yourself, the new talents you discover in yourself, the needs you had not seen before. These are ways in which God continues to speak to you and open your vocation. A decision for servant ministry may be a lifetime decision, but a vocational choice is not. There are many ways to be in ministry, and as you continue to grow and develop, your understanding of your vocation will grow and develop. By closing yourself to new possibilities and by failing to grow in your relationships, you limit the ways in which you make real your response to the call of God.

Remember that God is always calling you and that your vocation is always unfolding as you deepen your relationship with God, with others, and with creation. This is not static but a process of illuminating, clarifying, unfolding. Every vocational decision point is the foundation and context for the next.

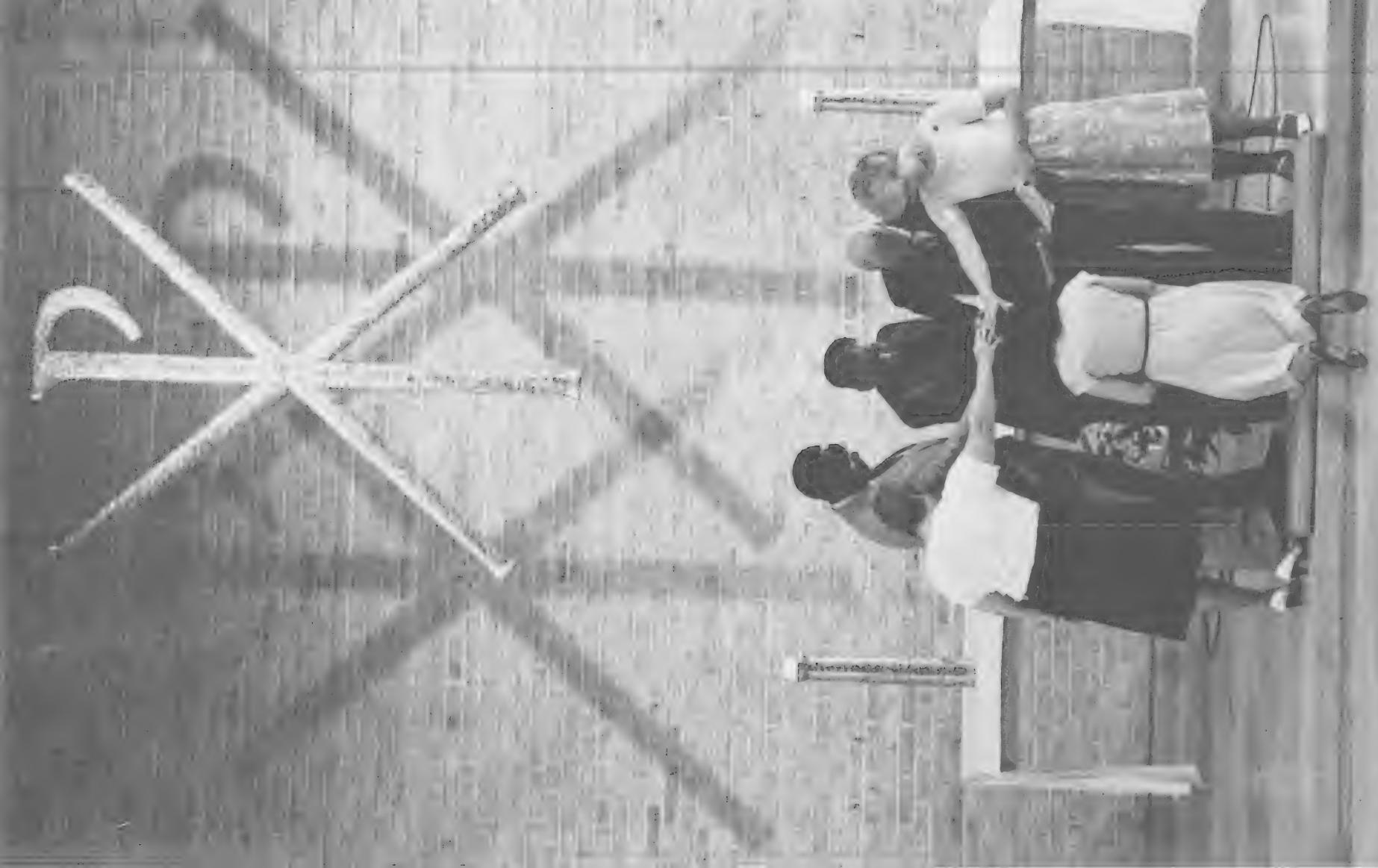


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## **PART II:**

*The Settings for  
Servant Leadership*



# 4

## The Connectional Structure

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one.

—1 Corinthians 12:4-6, RSV

And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. . . .

—Ephesians 4:11-12, RSV

There are varieties of gifts and varieties of ministry for those who would be servant leaders in the United Methodist Church, and all are called to equip the saints for the work of ministry and build up the body of Christ. In order to help you explore these options and clarify what it is that you need to do most in life, a number of settings for diaconal and ordained ministry and the mission personnel of the General Board of Global Ministries are described in the following chapters.

The primary setting for all forms of ministry in the United Methodist Church is its connectional structure. For John Wesley, that structure was not a hierarchy of inter-related conferences, boards, and agencies, but a loose-knit structure in which Christians of like mind and like spirit linked arms in common cause. "If thine heart is as my heart. . . give me thine hand," said Wesley. Today, we would call it a network, and although the network has changed over the years, the connection of which we are a part still links the ministry of the local church with the ministries of the annual, jurisdictional, and general conferences. It is a system which guarantees the church in its many local settings pastoral leadership appointed by the bishop and a system that provides the church's local settings the means by which it can extend its ministry through the boards and agencies of the church. It is also a system which enables United Methodists to link up with other Christian churches and denominations for witness and service to the gospel. It is the image we use to express our union with the body of Christ through mutual support of mission and ministry.

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# 5

## Varieties of Diaconal Ministry

Persons interested in diaconal ministry have many choices to explore. They not only build up and equip the church for action in the world through education, evangelism, worship, music, and counseling, but they are also involved in outreach through ministries to the handicapped, work in community and social service agencies, involvement in advocacy for the powerless, and participation in government, campus ministries, communications, church administration, teaching, counseling, drug rehabilitation, and more. Wherever the needs of the world are evidenced, the church is called to minister, and diaconal ministers may be called upon to serve.

\* \* \*

Charles is the director of development and public relations in a United Methodist home for children. Once an orphanage, the home now specializes in youth with emotional, behavioral, or educational problems. Charles became a diaconal minister after beginning his career in personnel work in industry. His vocation search called him from one mission field to another quite different one.

\* \* \*

Interest in counseling led Phillip in another direction. After seminary, where he received the Master's of Religious Education degree, he worked for a time as a youth minister. When his satisfaction in the counseling phase of that job became evident, he moved to a mental health center where he now works as a child welfare supervisor.

\* \* \*

An interest in the unique needs of the Asian-American community led Lung to a church-based diaconal ministry that expresses itself in a variety of programs and services. Central to his ministry as a community developer is the assistance he gives to new immigrants who wish to preserve family traditions in a new and



rapidly changing society. One of the ways he seeks to accomplish this is by helping them to relate to the church.

\* \* \*

A senior citizens project of a slightly different sort is housed at a United Methodist Church. The program includes telephone calls to elderly persons at night, a handy repair service, and a variety of classes at the church on Thursdays. While the folks are there, they get a home cooked meal and can have their blood pressure checked. Nell, who has worked in the church as a deaconess/diaconal minister, came up with the idea. To fund her program she gets support from two districts in the area and Advance Special funding as well.

\* \* \*

Mary decided to become a diaconal minister as a response to her call to serve. She wanted to make an outward commitment and have the authorization of the United Methodist Church for her ministry. In her work as Director of Christian Education, she was able to link service, liturgy, and nurture, giving her an opportunity to motivate and enable laity as "hearers and doers of the word".

\* \* \*

Employment for the handicapped brought Goodwill Industries into being some fifty years ago through the efforts of two Methodist churches. So perhaps it is not surprising that Jack, a United Methodist diaconal minister, is now executive director of such a program.

\* \* \*

One of the ways of preserving the rich heritage of the Hispanic community has been through music. Felicia is a church musician who has fulfilled her diaconal call by enabling persons to express theological understandings through hymnody and other forms of liturgy.

\* \* \*

Social services plus a heavy emphasis on advocacy fill Ruth's days as coordinator of the Community Programs of United Ministries in a metropolitan area. It is a community ministry of three United Methodist churches in the area. A recent emphasis was directed toward the local natural gas company—trying to work out ways to prevent shutoff of heating during cold weather and to help the poor in better budgeting. A housing rehabilitation program has been in place for a year; work is done with neighborhood and support groups; and direct services focus on everything from summer camps and after-school programs to a youth drop-in center.

\* \* \*

The full range of education-related opportunities open to diaconal ministers is illustrated further in the ministries of Loreeda, who is a campus minister; Linda, a professor of Christian Education; and Geneva, an advisor to student organizations and director of the Learning Resources Curriculum Lab—all at United Methodist-related colleges.

# 6

## Pastoral Ministry Settings

In the United Methodist Church, a pastoral charge consists of one or more local churches or congregations to which an ordained minister is appointed as pastor. Additional ordained ministers may be appointed to larger churches as associate pastors. In some instances, two pastors may be appointed as co-pastors to a parish. Sometimes several local churches may form a cooperative parish, group ministry, or extended parish that has a staff including more than one ordained minister and other paid staff persons. The paid church staff of larger churches or cooperative parishes may include administrators, educators, music and age-group specialists, and others who provide services to the congregation and community. Some of these persons may be diaconal ministers; others may be mission personnel of the General Board of Global Ministries.

Whether the parish is large or small, the tasks of the ordained minister who is a pastor are similar. Consider, for a moment, the duties of a pastor as outlined in Reflection 14.

### REFLECTION 14: *The Duties of a Pastor*

The pastor shall oversee the total ministry of the local church in its nurturing ministries and in fulfilling its mission of witness and service in the world by: (1) giving pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership in the church, equipping them to fulfill the ministry to which they are sent as servants under the Lordship of Christ; (2) providing ministry within the congregation and to the world; (3) administering the temporal affairs of the congregation. . . .

—Par. 438, 1984 Discipline

In the context of these basic responsibilities, a pastor gives attention to four basic areas of duty:

1. Preaching, Teaching, Worship
  - preaching and teaching the Word
  - administering the sacraments
  - conducting appropriate services of worship
  - instructing candidates for church membership

2. Pastoral care
  - visiting in the homes of church and community
  - counseling those in need
3. Supervision and Program
  - ordering the life of the congregation
  - offering counsel and theological reflection
  - developing goals, plans, and leadership
  - giving oversight to the educational program
  - participating in denominational and ecumenical programs
4. Administration
  - being the administrative officer
  - administering the provisions of the *Discipline*
  - giving an account of pastoral ministries

\* \* \*

Pastors vary widely in their interests, skills, and attitudes. These characteristics, combined with the needs of the parish, lead pastors to devote quite different proportions of time to the major tasks of the pastor described above. Though the pastors of the larger churches may specialize in one or two of these basic areas of responsibility, most pastors must attend to all of the duties while, at the same time, caring for their own personal needs and the needs of their families. Reflection 15 will give you insight into the ways in which these duties are lived out in a variety of settings.

### REFLECTION 15: *A Journal of Pastoral Ministries*

*Sunday:* John is a recent seminary graduate appointed as an associate pastor of a large suburban church. He was up earlier than usual this morning because it was one of the few Sundays of the year that he would preach at the 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. worship services. Normally his participation in worship is confined to the reading of Scripture or a prayer. Though preaching, he still gave leadership to a young adult class at 9:45 a.m. and met with the youth at 7:00 p.m. in the evening. At the end of this busy day, Tim wanted to discuss how to help a friend on drugs. The afternoon was spent with his family.

*Monday:* Doug and Sandy are a clergy-couple assigned to a rural circuit. After breakfast they went to work on the worship plans for the coming Sunday and reviewed their busy schedule for the week. While Sandy read some background material for her sermon, Doug prepared a column for the church newsletter. Their work together was cut short when Sue Gibson came by to ask Doug for help in finding a convales-



cent home for her eighty-six-year-old mother. After lunch, Sandy visited several members in the hospital while Doug contacted the director of a United Methodist home to find out what options were open to Mrs. Gibson. After supper, Doug met with his Council on Ministries while Sandy relaxed after a busy day.

*Tuesday:* Rod is the pastor of a growing urban black congregation. At 6:30 a.m. he was out of the parsonage sitting on the bench at the bus stop talking with people as they left for work. By discovering who they were and what they did, he had an opportunity to do some street counseling and introduce them to the ministry of the church. By 8:00 a.m. he was at the hospital with the Jacksons during Mr. Jackson's surgery. The family had a lot of questions about hospital procedures, death, and faith. This was his first opportunity to become better acquainted with this family. He returned to the church office about 10:30 a.m. and completed plans for the Sunday service. Rod had lunch with a committee working on ways to get tutoring services for children who are not sufficiently served by the existing public school programs. Later in the day he saw a man who needed help getting a job, a couple that is getting a divorce, and a teenager who thinks she is pregnant.

*Wednesday:* Juanita is the pastor of a small Hispanic congregation trying to establish itself in a satellite city of a major metropolitan area.

The Spanish population of the city has grown rapidly as migrant workers, immigrants, and transient families settled into this relatively small urban area. About 10:00 a.m. Juanita met with the personnel manager of a local factory to see if there were any jobs open for the unemployed of her community. A few jobs, menial in nature and paying minimum wages, were there. In the afternoon she walked through the neighborhood talking with the people she saw and uncovering more needs than she could ever hope to address. She was joined by her lay leader at 7:00 p.m. and together they sat down with the board of trustees of the church which allows them to share their facilities. There is frustration over the additional maintenance costs of housing two congregations in the same building. Juanita yearns for the day when her congregation can have a church building of its own.

*Thursday:* Linda is the pastor of a small-town church. After getting her youngest child off to school, she headed for a meeting with the other pastors of the district. They discussed special offerings and plans for a lay leadership training program and then were addressed by an interdenominational panel of clergy on the ecumenical concerns of the district. During lunch, Linda received word that Mr. Young had died and that the funeral would be Saturday afternoon. She left the luncheon early and went directly to the Young residence. Sandra Young and the children were upset and needed Linda's support and prayers. She stayed with them the rest of the afternoon. After supper with her family at 6:00 p.m., she met with the teams of visitors who would go to visit in the homes of new residents, visitors to the church, and the sick or bereaved. Their awareness of Mr. Young's death made them more sensitive to the importance of their tasks.

*Friday:* George is a pastor in a cooperative parish ministry. He began this morning as he has most Friday mornings, completing his preparations for the Sunday service. His review of the service was cut short, however, with the arrival of other members of the parish leadership team. They spent the next several hours evaluating their work in the parish, sharing mutual concerns, and discussing how to do a better job with persons facing crises. Their meeting concluded with a light lunch together. George enjoys the support he gets from other members of the leadership team. He can't imagine effective parish ministry without it. George did some running in the afternoon and spent the entire evening with his family. Though he received several phone calls around dinner, he scheduled appointments for the week to come with those who wished to see him.

*Saturday:* Paul is a Korean pastor who is working hard to develop a small congregation in a metropolitan area. He was up early, as usual,



and began the day in prayer with his family. They prayed for one another, the church, the needs of its members, and the world. Another busy Saturday had begun. After breakfast Paul read a little, reworked a section of his sermon, and ran off the bulletins on the mimeograph machine. He then spent a few hours calling on church members before returning to the church for an afternoon youth meeting. Soon after the youth left the church, a young couple arrived with their friends and family to rehearse a wedding which would take place on Sunday afternoon. After a rehearsal dinner, Paul had time to spend with his pre-schooler before he put her to bed. Paul and his wife have adapted to their work schedules by looking to the middle of the week for the family time they often miss on weekends.

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# 7

## Chaplaincy and Related Ministries

One of the ways ordained clergy serve God and extend the ministry of the church is through an appointment ". . . under endorsement by the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries . . . , such as: chaplaincy in the armed forces, Veterans Administration, industry, correctional institutions, health care fields, community service organizations, and other related ministries . . ." (par. 443.1b, 1984 *Discipline*) Persons serving in these unique settings are expected to have specialized training to qualify for endorsement. A primary difference between these appointments and the local church is the nature of the institutions in which ministry takes place and the role of the minister in relationship to those settings. Ordained ministers appointed to these extension ministries serve in institutions whose primary purposes are not the ministry of the church, but profit, education, international security, peacekeeping, incarceration, or hospitalization. Though the purposes and environments differ from the local church, this does not mean that those endorsed have ministries which are in any way less valid than the ministries of the local church. They too are servants of God ministering to the deepest needs of humanity. Their ministries are as profoundly representative of the ministry of God through Christ as the ministries expressed through the local church.

### REFLECTION 16: *The Uniqueness of Ministry Endorsed by the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries*

First, clergy endorsed by the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries operate in pluralistic settings. They serve people who are not United Methodists. In fact, many may be agnostic, indifferent, or even antagonistic to a religious faith. Yet strangely, there is identification with the minister if the minister is credible and relevant to the needs of the individual within that institution. A person lying in a hospital bed may say, "This is my pastor," and develop a close relationship because of the intimacy of crisis.

Second, this ministry usually takes place in ecumenical settings. Involved clergypersons tend to share a common core of professional



responsibility. They nurture the total religious community, encourage moral responsibility, and provide a climate for growth and maturation regardless of creed. As clergypersons of different faiths work together, they may recognize their common goals and develop objectives that can be accomplished together. They may operate from the same offices, share the same worship facilities and support staff, and coordinate their work schedules.

Third, endorsed clergy know that they not only serve people as individuals or groups, but that they have an additional and equally important task. They minister to the needs of the institutions through which they serve. They must be aware of the way decisions about policies are made and participate in their formulation to ensure that structures do not dehumanize people within their institutions. Therefore, they are regular participants in the meetings which are chaired by the director or commander of their institution. They provide input, staff papers, and make recommendations as advocates of the people they serve.

Fourth, endorsed clergy are concerned about the general welfare of all the people with whom they serve. They are humanitarians in the best sense of that word. Most of their ministry takes place outside the chapel

walls. They tend to meet people in the crises of their lives—where they live, walk, and move—rather than through structural contacts as clients coming to them in the context of their office or chapel.

Fifth, these ministers operate in a mobile environment. In most cases the people whom they serve are transient. Their ministry, therefore, is not to a stable congregation but to a rapidly passing parade.

Sixth, endorsed clergy may conduct programs which are not denominational in focus but which may be characterized as human growth or character building programs. They may lead in educational programs which do not prepare persons for church membership but which, in all actuality, prepare people to lead more congruent, ethical, and moral lives.

\* \* \*

Chaplain Stephen Johnson is in ministry to 360 young males at the Robert F. Kennedy Center, Federal Correctional Center at Morgantown, West Virginia. Chaplain Johnson is a man who cares. He walks the compound and is available to talk with any resident about his personal problems. He has access to the whole prison system in his efforts to minister.

Chaplain Johnson ministers in many traditional and non-traditional ways. In addition to preaching, teaching, baptizing, and serving communion, he counsels inmates and their families using a lot of transactional analysis in his work. He cares about families by providing a marriage enrichment program for some, and for others a room in which residents can learn to play with their families again. When a prisoner is released, Chaplain Johnson works with "care committees" in United Methodist churches to help bridge the gap between prison and responsible participation in society again.

As a part of the connectional structure of Methodism, Chaplain Johnson works in his district serving on committees, preaching in local churches, and teaching at conferences. He encourages ministers to visit the prisons in their district in order to broaden their own understanding of prisons. He also works with the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries in the endorsing process.

\* \* \*

War is inimical to the teachings of Jesus, but the role of a military chaplain is not to justify war. A chaplain's task is to minister to the emotional and spiritual needs of soldiers—in war time or peace.

Tom Hines feels called to this ministry. His assignment is Fort Campbell, Kentucky—home of the 101st Airborne Division. Here he is one of 36 chaplains whose 1,500 "parishioners" serve as mechanics, pilots, and air traffic controllers.

Chaplain Hines is the senior pastor at Central Chapel on the base. In many



ways the program reminds one of a local church. It includes a church school program, choir, a bowling league called "The Holy Rollers", and Bible study groups. It is much like an average church—but not entirely. It is a community where people have been uprooted and placed together to serve their country in the U.S. Army. It is an artificial community in many ways, and the pressures are very real even in times of peace.

Chaplain Hines spends a lot of time counseling the men and women who come to him with personal and professional problems. His extra training in clinical/pastoral education helps assure his parishioners of top-notch care.

\* \* \*

Every day hospital chaplains help patients and their relatives cope with sickness, disability, and even death. In a mental hospital, the problems are perhaps even more excruciating in some ways. Chaplains in this setting are part of a team. They work shoulder to shoulder with doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, and social workers.

Faith Cornwall is part of such a team at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute in Nashville, Tennessee, where she heads the chaplaincy program. In meetings to evaluate a patient's illness and plan a course of treatment, Chaplain Cornwall is often asked what she sees as the relationship between the person's

religion and his or her mental condition. Other areas of involvement for the chaplain and her two associates include Bible study, in addition to the traditional morning worship and Sunday School. Pastoral visits on the wards and office consultations also are part of the job.

Music therapy is done by a student with special abilities in this area. Working with such students from Vanderbilt Divinity School, as well as interns, is a part of Chaplain Cornwall's job. Hers is an educational ministry. Chaplain Cornwall also gets out into the community as much as possible to speak in churches and extends her educational ministry through workshops for clergy.

\* \* \*

The success of industry is measured by the rate of production and the flow of profit. The industrial chaplain stands in the middle of the needs of management and the men and women who power the industrial machine. When these people arrive on the job, they bring with them everything that is going on in their lives—from the joy of a first-born baby to a nagging problem with alcohol—and inevitably it affects their job performance.

R.J. Reynolds Industries, with headquarters in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was among the first to recognize employees' problems and launch an industrial chaplaincy. Heading the program is Rodney Brown, a United Methodist minister with a background in business and counseling. Chaplain Brown directs a team of pastoral counselors in ministry to 15,000 employees in the Winston-Salem plant. Individual counseling takes a lot of their time. For special needs, they refer people to community social services, though in the case of problem drinking, there is an in-house alcohol recovery program.

Chaplain Brown works with industrial management at a number of levels. A major focus of the program is training supervisors on the line to relate more effectively to their people who appear to be suffering from a personal problem. He is influential at the policy level and is frequently asked to confer with management when a new policy is being proposed.\*

\* \* \*

\*The chaplaincy settings cited above are excerpted from the filmstrip "The Challenge of Chaplaincy."

# 8

## Ministry In Higher Education

The United Methodist Church supports some 800 persons who serve as ministers in higher education. Some of these are campus ministers working in Wesley Foundations (United Methodist campus ministry units). Other campus ministers work in ecumenical units, cooperating in the name of United Methodism with one or more other denominations. Still others are chaplains at United Methodist-related colleges and universities. Some are ordained; others are not. Some work full-time on campus; others hold part-time positions.

For all of them, ministry in higher education is as varied as the settings in which they serve. Ministry for those called to represent the church on campus might be managing a traditional "home away from home" for 18-22 year-old students, complete with television set, pool table, Tuesday night fellowship suppers, and volleyball tournaments. It could be a ministry on a commuter campus that does very little direct student ministry, but instead focuses on providing links between the resources of the college, of the churches, and of the local community. Or, it might be ten faculty and administrative staff gathered early on a weekday morning to share in prayer and discuss the ethics of their profession as educators.

Ministry in higher education is also two hundred people gathered for a weekend conference to examine sexuality from sociological, psychological, and theological perspectives. It could mean a lively discussion about the religion and the arts, or about religion and the anatomy lab.

The concerns of campus ministers and chaplains range from pastoral care and counseling of faculty, staff, and students; to providing a place for fellowship and spiritual nurture; to calling people to deal with social justice issues from a faith perspective.

The people with whom campus ministers and chaplains work range from eighteen-year-old high school graduates to fifty-five-year-old faculty members. They may be ethnic minority students and staff, second-career and returning women undergraduates, medical, science, and law school graduate students.

In addition to caring for people and calling for them to grow in faith, ministers in higher education also care for the institutions of learning in which



they serve. They raise issues about values and education, about what it means to be an educated person and a Christian, and about the role of education in our society.

Campus ministry is financed by annual conferences and local churches in cooperation with the college or university involved, by ecumenical groups in which the campus ministry participates, or by the college or university itself. Campus ministers who are ordained are not only employed by a college, university, or ecumenical agency, but are also appointed by the bishop of the annual conference.

At independent, church-related colleges and universities, the chaplain may be part of the student affairs area or the department of religion. Church-related institutions usually provide on-campus space for the chaplain's office and activities.

At public colleges and universities, the campus ministry often is located adjacent to the campus in a church-owned building, although some schools may provide space on the campus itself for offices and/or activities. Campus ministries at some public colleges, especially commuter and community colleges, may not be based in an office or a building at all. Many of these campus ministers work out of local churches or offices in their homes, and do much of their ministry within the context of the community college's own cycle of activities.

Some campus ministers and chaplains teach courses in religion and other disciplines; some teach courses for credit in the curriculum, while others teach non-credit courses. Campus ministers and chaplains who teach for credit often have, in addition to their theological degree, completed a doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D., Th.D.) in the academic area they teach.

In addition to campus ministers and chaplains, many ordained and diaconal ministers teach in university departments of religion, while others teach in departments such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, English, economics, and other areas. As a college or university teacher, the individual is employed as a faculty member, thus meeting the same academic preparation requirements as other faculty, in addition to those required for the ordained or diaconal ministry. The annual conference may appoint an ordained minister to this employment, provided the university already has accepted her/him as a faculty member. Some ordained and diaconal faculty, in addition, may enter administrative positions in the college or university, such as counselor, dean, or president.

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# 9

## Mission Personnel

It is the responsibility of the General Board of Global Ministries to identify settings throughout the world where mission personnel are needed to proclaim the Word and witness to its meaning.

"The World Division exists to confess Jesus Christ as divine Lord and Savior to all people in every place, testifying to his redemptive and liberating power in every sphere of human existence and activity, and calling all people to Christian obedience and discipleship." Par. 1431 *The United Methodist Discipline*.

The World Division works with colleague churches to determine mission personnel needs overseas. Such needs may be for long term or short term service and involve the skills of teachers, evangelists, pastors, doctors, nurses, agriculturalists and people with other technical abilities.

The National Division works with conferences and jurisdictions as well as historical mission programs and projects to identify needs for home missionaries, deaconesses, church and community workers, US-2's, and community developers to serve under the board's direction.

### Deaconesses and Home Missionaries

. . . Deaconesses and home missionaries function through diverse forms of service directed toward the world to make Jesus Christ known in the fullness of his ministry and mission which mandate that his followers:

- a) Alleviate suffering.
- b) Eradicate causes of injustice and all that robs life of dignity and worth.
- c) Facilitate the development of full human potential.
- d) Share in building global community through the Church Universal.

. . . Home missionaries may serve in any agencies or programs of the United Methodist Church in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Deaconesses are available for service with any agency or program of the United Methodist Church. Deaconesses may be appointed outside the United States through the World Division. Both deaconesses and home missionaries may also serve in other than United Methodist Church agencies or programs . . .

—Par. 1418.1, 2, 1984 *Discipline*



Deaconesses and home missionaries are serving as teachers in mission schools and on college campuses giving guidance to students struggling to discover who they are. They are serving on the staffs of church-related social welfare agencies, exploring ways of assisting the culturally and economically deprived person to gain a sense of dignity and self-respect. As trained medical personnel, deaconesses and home missionaries bring technical skills and a quality of life necessary to serve the needs of the physically and emotionally disabled. As parish workers and Christian educators in inner-city, urban and suburban churches, they are responsible for guiding and programming experiences and opportunities which will further the religious development and Christian nurture of persons of all ages.

Deaconesses and home missionaries are commissioned by a bishop. They serve in the United States, and a lifetime commitment is presumed. Deaconesses serve the church in any capacity not requiring full ordination. Home missionaries (male and female) may be ordained and serve the church in pastoral settings. Deaconesses and home missionaries are seated at annual conference sessions with the privilege of the floor. Their appointments are made to church and non-church agencies.

### Church and Community Ministry

The church is first and last a caring community and under order, additionally, to show the world at large that caring works as a way of life. To enable the local church and people to carry out this commission, church and community ministry provides professional personnel with special skills and commitment to reveal Christ's spirit and principles in human life. Church and community ministry enlists and trains lay leaders, challenges persons to have a concern for human rights and welfare, helps clarify needs, and guides churches and communities into ways of working together to meet those needs.

Church and community workers are related directly to an annual conference in response to particular needs of leadership development, enlarging parish concepts, or in the utilization of governmental services. An episcopal area, district, or annual conference participates in the planning, funding, and evaluation of programs involving church and community workers. The terms of service will vary according to the needs and availability of the worker. While most of the current church and community workers relate directly to congregational work, many of them also center their work in community organizations:

\* \* \*

In the Kansas East Conference, a network of drop-in centers for senior citizens has been in operation through the efforts of a church and community worker and a parish staff.

\* \* \*

In Clinton, Missouri, a food and nutritional program grew out of a hunger task force developed by an Interchurch Coordinating Council, in which a church and community worker is a staff member.

\* \* \*

In North Carolina, at the Robeson County Church and Community Center, a church and community worker is assistant director of a program which not only includes casework, emergency aid, work with senior citizens, voter registration, etc; but also federal adjunct programs with 37 employees to help with housing, employment, illiteracy, delinquency, and the like.

\* \* \*

Many church and community workers are in close touch with governmental and secular agencies in cooperative arrangements which amplify the work of the church. Often church groups have been able to pick up when governmental services have been curtailed.

\* \* \*

## United Methodist Voluntary Service

United Methodist Voluntary Service (UMVS) is a personnel support system for full-time workers in community organizations which do not have paid professional staff. UMVS is a ministry to marginal peoples who traditionally have been the object of the mission of others. UMVS supports their initiatives and programs to be in mission to themselves and to their own people and their own community.

UMVSers are mostly young persons in their twenties usually alienated from the mainstream of society whose lives have not been meaningfully touched by organized religion. Seventy percent of these are female and forty percent are ethnic minority persons. There are no ordained clergy in the group at any time, but some former participants have become ordained, and several have inter-church-related vocations.

The major support for UMVSers comes from the local community organization. UMVS does provide technical assistance, legitimization, advocacy, certification, communications, networking, management, planning, program development, organizational development, problem solving, resource development, and skill and information acquisition.

More than 100 community organizations with limited resources have gained skills and experience with the help of UMVS in order to maintain and improve the viability of the organization and to achieve programmatic goals. Many have become quite successful and have developed into community organizations with professionally paid staff. One useful factor is the UMVS stance acknowledging that the people own their own projects and are in control of their own activities. UMVS affirms people who struggle with their own needs and problems, their own dreams and programs.

## Community Developer Program

Community development people work in concert with the church and community, addressing socially debilitating conditions. Their skills and energy are utilized toward empowerment and self-determination. Their work can bring about changes in political control, the delivery of new services, the economic life of the community, and the pattern of local involvement in community issues.

\* \* \*

Boston, Mass.—The Political/Leadership Development Program at Union U.M.C. is primarily geared toward youth and young adults, who are recruited through contact with community leadership, agencies, and organizations. The training sessions focus on action, reflection, and verbal evaluations of goals and objectives.

\* \* \*



Anniston, Alabama—The developer at Haven U.M.C. has been instrumental in securing actual job placements for minority persons in both the public and private sector. Due to the lack of diversity in Anniston's economic base, there is a higher-than-average incidence of unemployment. The unemployment menace is combated through the efforts of an interracial organization, the Committee of Unified Leadership (C.O.U.L.), and the Calhoun County Improvement Association (C.C.I.A.). Each monthly report of the developer indicates the number of actual job placements which have been made through these efforts. In addition, there is an Employment Information Center.

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Omaha, Nebraska—The St. Clair U.M.C. program provides a special counseling service for armed forces veterans who face not only bleak employment prospects, but paramount problems of housing, food, and educational deficiencies. This program is set up to aid in alleviation of these problems by making available guidance and information.

\* \* \*

Seattle, Washington—Operation Emergency Center at Grace U.M.C. is a strong model of human service delivery geared specifically to address emergency needs. The program's thrusts range from a job placement service, special

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employment service, prison rehabilitation, to a special African Drought Committee.

\* \* \*

Chicago, Illinois—One of the major activities of the project at Olivet U.M.C. is with the community's youth. A cultural, tutorial, and recreational youth center has been established in conjunction with the Christian Action Ministry-Olivet After-School Program. Olivet is likewise engaged in a joint venture with the Interfaith Committee on Hunger providing a food and clothing pantry for families in need.

#### **US-2s**

US-2s are, for the most part, young college graduates in a two-year voluntary service program in the United States. Many people wish to explore church-related vocational opportunities and/or secure pre-professional or professional on-the-job experience with church programs and agencies. Many persons simply want to give two years of service in the missional program of the church. The program helps meet personal needs for vocational growth and testing and the desire to serve others.

There is a strong sense of commitment to one another among US-2s. The "esprit de corps" spreads beyond each year's class to a general recognition of having been in a national service corps. US-2s generally have a strong sense of ownership of the program and class representatives participate in planning and training. Some continue working at the US-2 assignment beyond the two-year term of service and many continue educational work. A large percentage enter church-related vocations.

#### **World Division Mission Personnel**

The mission personnel of the World Division carry out strategies for world mission within the context of the cultural and historical understandings out of which relationships have developed with the Christian communities in other nations. They are assigned by the division to fields of service in their own or in other countries. In addition to work within the United Methodist Church, persons in mission are commissioned for service within central conferences, affiliated autonomous churches, autonomous Methodist churches, united churches, and other ecumenical bodies.

The World Division recognizes and affirms that many of the tasks once requiring missionaries from our church now are being served by well-prepared nationals within the churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Our United Methodist Church must direct a growing share of its resources

toward an international community of persons in mission dedicated to the carrying of the gospel to the ends of the earth. Presently, only 6 percent of the missionary support budget of the World Division is used to support nationals in service either in their own countries or across frontiers in other nations. The World Division does not measure the effectiveness of its ministry solely by the numbers of U.S. missionaries, but in terms of the vitality of Christian persons in colleague churches throughout the world and of our joint efforts—theirs and ours together—in proclamation, outreach, service, and cooperation on issues of common concern. One fundamental objective and evidence of its growing fulfillment is the emergence of trained and committed persons in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean for joint service in the task of mission outreach to peoples where the church is not at work and to areas of our societies where the gospel has not been heard.

Thirty years ago in India, all heads of schools and hospitals, most district superintendents, and major church officers were missionaries. Today, trained Indian leaders fill these places of responsibility. The United Methodist Church has helped to build this leadership.

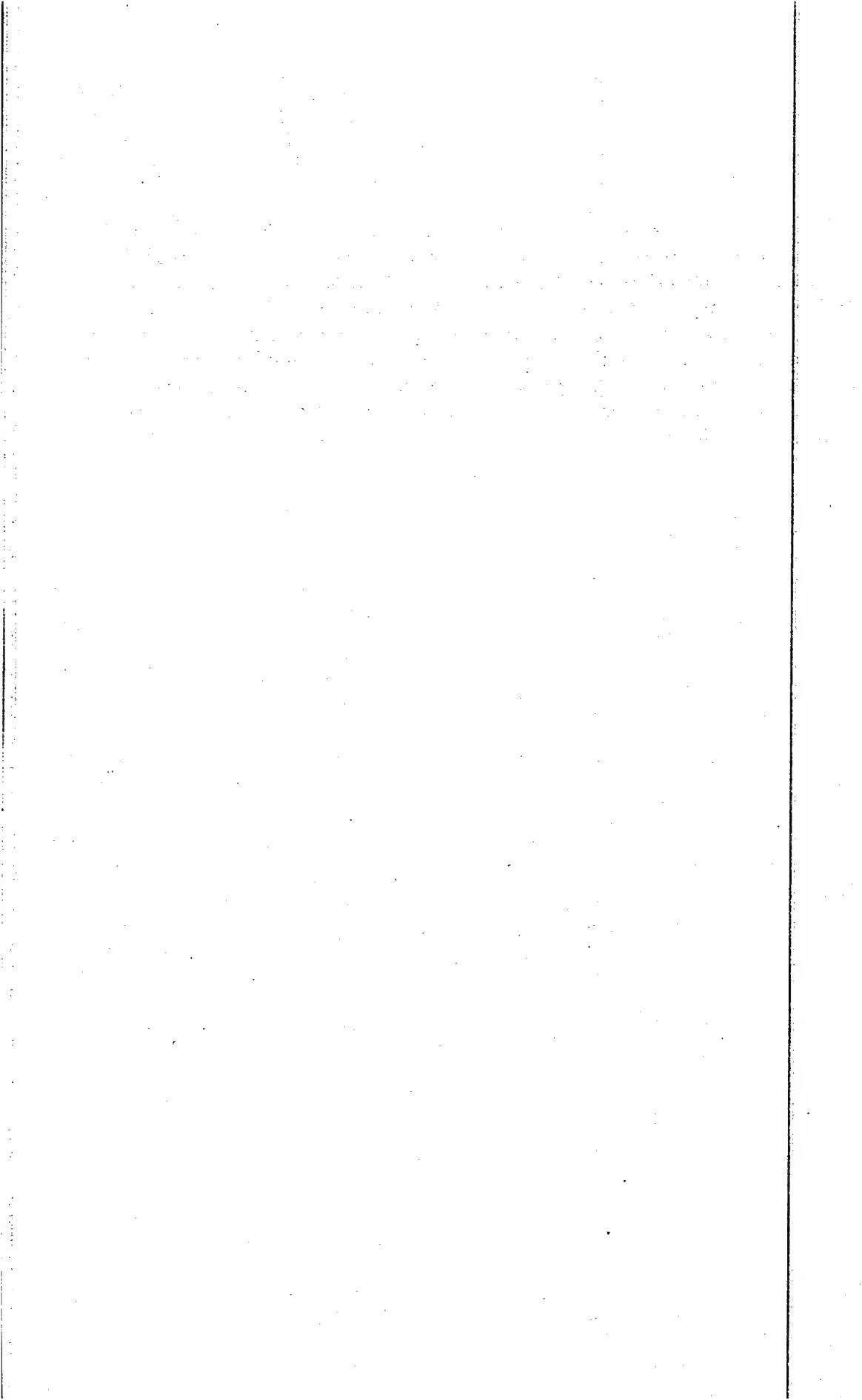
Moreover, it is not that nationals have merely replaced missionaries in a static situation. Significant growth is taking place in the total numbers of persons supported and enabled by our church. In Bolivia the leadership positions in the Evangelical Methodist Church are filled by trained Bolivians. Fifteen years ago 89 U.S. missionaries held many of these leadership positions. Though the number of U.S. missionaries today in Bolivia is less, 100 nationals are supported in part by the resources of the United Methodist Church. Six more Bolivians are in special assignments in Christian ministry and ten more are in preparatory training.

The numbers of United Methodist Church missionaries in Singapore today is eight, but Chinese and Tamil Indian leaders direct the churches and schools. Further, the Methodist Church of Singapore itself now supports 30 of its own missionaries in Christian outreach in Southeast Asia.

Some of the most dynamic growth today in churches to which we are related is taking place across Africa, in Indonesia, and in Korea—areas in which trained nationals are clearly in charge and are directing the churches' evangelistic ministry. Nationals who are supported by our church as they go into other countries in mission service are strategically important in today's world. Two-thirds of the people unreached by the gospel now reside in areas where persons with a U.S. passport cannot enter for missionary service. Often nationals in neighboring countries can. Churches in the developing areas of the world are today calling to one another in an exciting and inspiring way. It is the privilege of the United Methodist Church to help make this possible.

Still, missionaries from the U.S.A. are needed today. The task is not finished.

Indeed, work in new areas and among peoples who have not heard the gospel calls for more persons from out of the life of our church. Related churches are asking for additional personnel from the United Methodist Church in the U.S.A. Our church must be challenged to provide the resources to enable our response to these needs. The specific numerical goals for the deployment, location and work of United Methodist missionaries from the U.S. must be constantly reviewed in relation to three critical factors: the needs and invitations for persons expressed by related churches, the mission goals of the World Division, and the resources available.



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## **PART III:**

*Steps Into  
Servant Ministries*



# 10

## Steps Into Diaconal Ministry

How does one become a diaconal minister?

**Entrance into Diaconal Ministry.** The diaconal ministry is recognized by The United Methodist Church as a called-out and set-apart ministry. Therefore, it is appropriate that those persons who present themselves as candidates for diaconal ministry be examined regarding the authenticity of their call by God to this office. . . .

**Candidacy for Diaconal Ministry.** Candidates for the diaconal ministry of The United Methodist Church, upon hearing and heeding the call to serve, shall take the first formal step toward the ministry by qualifying as candidates for the diaconal ministry. Candidates thus are under the care and supervision of the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry. . . .

—Pars. 303 and 304, 1984 *Discipline*

Persons wishing to explore diaconal ministry should get in touch with their conference Board of Diaconal Ministry. The following are the “Steps Into Diaconal Ministry” which have been established as minimum requirements; *Conference Boards of Diaconal Ministry may have additional requirements:*

1. Persons seeking to become diaconal ministers in the United Methodist Church must have a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and the ministry of the Christian church.
2. They must contact the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry which will assign a mentor to guide them on a spiritual journey of exploration and affirmation.
3. They must submit a written statement and be examined by the Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee in the local church where they have been an active member for at least one year.

The local church is the basic unit of ministry, and it is appropriate for a tentative vocational decision to be reviewed in that setting. The people in the

local church know and have the best opportunity to observe evidence of persons' gifts for ministry.

Prospective candidates for the diaconal ministry of the United Methodist Church, upon hearing and responding to the call to diaconal ministry, should first make their intentions known to the Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee in their local church. The committee should examine the person as to the seriousness of the call, the person's intent to follow the call, and personal and church qualifications for meeting the standards for the office of diaconal minister. The committee will bring its findings and recommendations to the charge conference for action. The charge conference shall then transmit the candidate's information and recommendation to the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry.

In anticipation of the meeting with the Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee, the person should write a letter stating a desire to become a diaconal minister in the United Methodist Church and requesting their endorsement. This request should be accompanied by a statement of calling into this ministry.

- significant influences (events or people)
- Personal experiences which seem to confirm a call (such as employed or volunteer service, education, or training experiences, etc.)
- indications of God's activity in the person's life
- expectations for life's work, relationships, and continued growth
- comments from family, friends, and colleagues concerning the person's vocational direction

4. Recommendation by a two-thirds vote of the charge conference where membership is held.
5. Application for candidacy in writing, to the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry.
6. As part of the candidacy process, they must meet the following educational requirements:
  - a) high school graduation
  - b) bachelor's degree
  - c) fulfillment of one of these four options:  
Graduate theological degree,  
or Master's degree,  
or Professional certification,  
or Commission by the General Board of Global Ministries
- d) Basic Studies of the Christian —Bible, theology, church history (including United Methodist history) mission of the church in the world, United Methodist doctrine and polity—either through a graduate degree program or the Foundational Course of Study for Diaconal Ministers.
7. Candidacy for at least one year, having met all candidacy requirements.



8. A satisfactory statement of good health.
9. Employment for at least one year in a position approved by the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry.
10. Application to the Board of Diaconal Ministry for consecration in the annual conference where church membership is held.
11. Examination and approval by the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry and recommendation to the annual conference for consecration to the office of diaconal minister.
12. The favorable vote of the annual conference.
13. Consecration as a diaconal minister by the bishop in a session of the annual conference. (This consecration is the church's recognition of God's call, the individual's response to that call, and the authorization of such persons for designated ministries of service and justice through the United Methodist Church.)
14. Consecrated diaconal ministers are seated in the annual conference and granted the appropriate benefits such a relationship makes possible.

The two resources used in the inquiry and exploration process are this resource, *The Christian As Minister* and *The Candidacy Journal* which can be obtained from the Division of Diaconal Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, Tenn. 37202 or your conference board.

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# 11

## Steps Into Ordained Ministry

Candidacy for ordained ministry is the first set of formal steps through which a person moves toward ordination and annual conference membership.

### STEP 1: The Inquiring Candidate

- Upon hearing a call to ministry, the candidate should read this vocational guide, *The Christian As Minister*. This book should be discussed in consultation with the candidate's pastor or another United Methodist minister.
- If the candidate wishes to explore the call to ministry in depth prior to a public declaration in the local church as outlined in Step 2, s/he may write the district superintendent, be assigned a supervising pastor, and enroll in candidacy studies as outlined in Step 3. No candidate choosing this option shall be certified as a candidate until all the requirements of Steps 2 and 3 have been met.

### STEP 2: The Declared Candidate

- Persons seeking to become certified candidates for ordained ministry shall consult with the Pastor and Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee after formulating a written statement reflecting their call to ordained ministry and requesting recommendation for certification.
- The committee shall interview each candidate and make a report to the charge conference.
- After two public announcements have been made, the charge conference votes to recommend (or not to recommend) the candidate to the district Committee on Ordained Ministry. To be valid such a recommendation must be confirmed by two-thirds majority vote. In addition, the candidate must have been a member or affiliate member of the congregation for one year and have been graduated from an accredited high school or received a certificate of equivalency.



### STEP 3: The Exploring Candidate

- Declared candidates and those seeking to explore candidacy for ordained ministry prior to making a public declaration shall apply to the district superintendent in writing for admission to candidacy studies.
- The candidate is assigned to a supervising pastor by the district Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM). The candidate is also given an enrollment form to be signed by the district superintendent and the supervising pastor.
- The candidate enrolls in the candidacy studies by sending the enrollment form to the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, Tennessee 37202, along with a check or money order for \$50. The \$50 fee includes the cost of the *Candidacy Guidebook*, *The Christian as Minister*, test scoring, and general administrative expense. A portion of this fee is returned to the annual conference to be used for the training of supervising pastors.
- The supervising pastor serves as "mentor" or "facilitator" to the candidate as s/he examines the call in light of biblical records, the role and function of United Methodist clergy, his/her personal gifts and graces, and evidences of leadership style. Utilizing new or confirmed insights that are specific to ministry and highlighted in this process, the candidate then makes a commitment to the form of ministry felt to be most appropriate.



#### STEP 4: The Certified Candidate

- The candidate appears before the dCOM for examination. The supervising pastor introduces the candidate to the district committee and presents a written report on the candidate's progress.
- The candidate is interviewed by the district committee in the presence of the supervising pastor. The dCOM votes to confirm the person as a candidate and may offer a certificate of candidacy.
- The supervising pastor adds to the candidate's report a description of the meeting with the district committee, records the vote, and lists the recommendations made to the candidate. Copies of the supervising pastor's full report then go to the candidate and the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

#### STEP 5: Candidacy Renewal

- The progress of candidates must be reviewed and candidacy renewed annually by the dCOM on recommendation of the charge conference.

#### STEP 6: Local Pastor Studies (optional)

- A candidate may apply for license as a local pastor after completing studies prescribed by the Division of Ordained Ministry administered by the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

- Licensing studies are a prerequisite to appointment as a full-time, part-time, or student local pastor.
- Local pastors not enrolled in college or seminary must make satisfactory progress in the ministerial course of study prescribed by the Division of Ordained Ministry.
- Local pastors who are not full-time students in college or seminary shall make satisfactory progress in the ministerial course of study and meet all the educational requirements for associate membership in the annual conference.

#### **STEP 7: Associate Membership**

- Local pastors who have been under full-time appointment for four years, and have completed the five year ministerial course of study at a course of study school, and have a minimum of 60 semester hours of credit toward a B.A. degree, may be recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry and elected by the annual conference members in full connection into associate membership and be ordained a deacon in the United Methodist Church.

#### **STEP 8: Probationary Membership**

- The candidate or student local pastor must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the dCOM; must have been graduated from a college or university listed by the University Senate with a bachelor of arts degree or its equivalent; must have been a certified candidate for one year; and have completed at least half of the work required for a master of divinity or equivalent first professional degree in a school of theology listed by the University Senate.
- The candidate may then be ordained a deacon and come under the nurture and guidance of the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

#### **STEP 9: Full Membership**

- Candidates who have been probationary members for at least two years may be admitted into membership in full connection in an annual conference after having fulfilled the requirements of par. 423 of the 1984 *Discipline*.
- They shall have served full-time for at least two full annual conference years following the completion of the A.B. and M. Div. degrees or their equivalent.
- Candidates who have been elected to full conference membership may be ordained as elders.

#### **STEP 10: Exceptional Promise Option**

- If an annual conference permits, an associate member who exhibits exceptional promise for the ministry may be received into probationary mem-

bership, after having completed a B.A. degree or its equivalent, and two years in the advanced ministerial course of study, and met the other requirements of par. 416 of the 1984 *Discipline*.

- Such a candidate may also progress to membership in full connection under the provisions of par. 423 when this is within the policy of an annual conference.

**For further information write:**

Division of Ordained Ministry  
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry  
The United Methodist Church  
P.O. Box 871  
Nashville, Tennessee 37202

# 12

## Steps Into Endorsement

by the Division of Chaplains  
and Related Ministries

All persons have the right to receive the full ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Church is aware of its responsibility to provide adequate professional ministry to persons in special situations beyond the local church. . . In order to assure high standards of competency, the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries shall have responsibility for clergy in appointments beyond the local church. . .

—Par. 1511.1, 1984 *Discipline*

The United Methodist Church is a connectional system. The General Conference determines which parts of that system have responsibility for various functions. Individuals are accountable to the annual conference, but standards and criteria for ordination, certification, and endorsement are established by the total church. Consequently, individuals who minister in military, industrial, health care, or prison settings are accountable to the annual conference, but they are endorsed by the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries (DCRM) of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Endorsement is the process established by the church to ensure appropriate representatives in such settings.

### Who needs endorsement?

The *Discipline* states that DCRM has responsibility ". . . for clergy in appointments beyond the local church, such as: chaplaincy in the armed forces, Veterans Administration, industry, correctional institutions, health-care fields, community service organizations, and those other related areas of service which conference Boards of Ordained Ministry and bishops may designate. Clergy to be appointed to any of the above appointments beyond the local church shall receive ecclesiastical endorsement through the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries." (par. 1511.1, 1984 *Discipline*)

### What is ecclesiastical endorsement?

Ecclesiastical endorsement is an affirmation that a person is or will be per-



forming a valid extension ministry consistent with the covenantal community of the United Methodist Church and has presented evidence of having the special education, experience, and skills necessary to perform that ministry. Endorsement is given to a specific setting. Should an individual move from one setting to another, the endorsement will be reviewed and, if approved, issued to the new setting.

#### **Requirements For Ecclesiastical Endorsement Basic Requirements**

Persons seeking ecclesiastical endorsement through DCRM to a specific setting must meet the following criteria:

1. Ordination as an elder and full membership in an annual conference
2. Graduation from an accredited college and seminary (Additional requirements are specified by setting below.)

#### **Civilian Chaplaincy (institution, industry, pastoral counseling)**

Standards for endorsement include certification by the appropriate national professional certifying agency. Those recognized by DCRM include:

- College of Chaplains of the American Protestant Hospital Association

- Association of Mental Health Clergy (AMHC)
- Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE)
- American Protestant Correctional Chaplains Association (APCCA)
- American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC)

In situations not covered by recognized certifying agencies, DCRM will set minimum standards which will include specialized training for the type of ministry for which endorsement is sought and will include at least one year of supervised clinical training or comparable professional experience.

### **Military Chaplaincy (U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marines)**

Applicants are responsible for contacting the office of the Chief of Chaplains of the military branch for which they are seeking endorsement. The appointment procedure varies with the branch of service.

Basic requirements for initial appointment (active duty or reserve) are:

1. One must be a citizen of the United States.
2. One must be physically qualified for general service based on an examination by the military.
3. One must meet current age requirements as determined by the military.

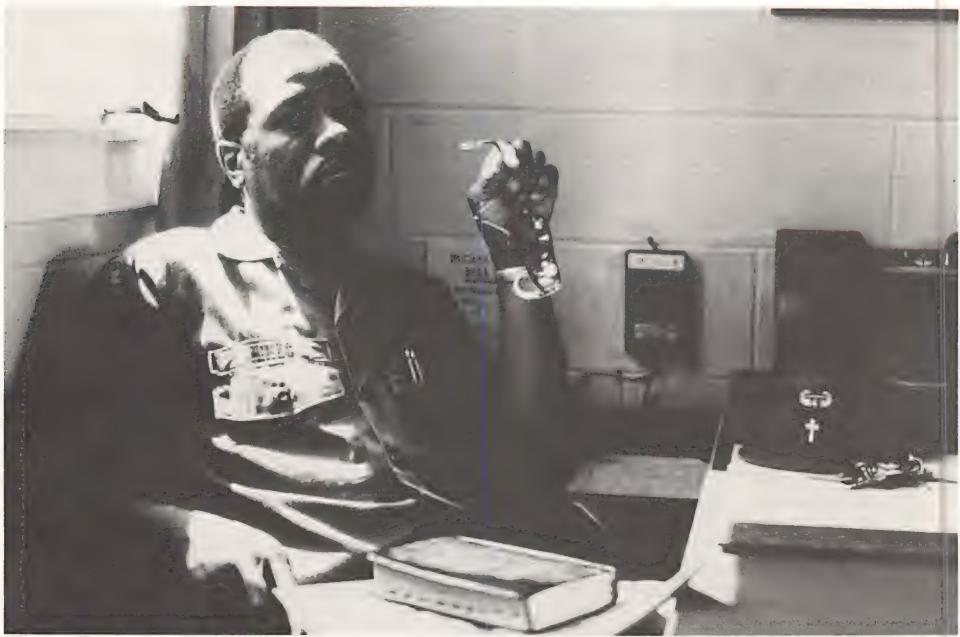
*Please direct your inquiries to the following offices:*

Chief of Chaplains  
Department of the Air Force  
HQ USAF/HC  
Washington, D.C. 20330  
Telephone: 202/767-4815

Chief of Chaplains  
Department of the Army  
Room 1E 416, The Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301  
Telephone: 202/695-1194

Chief of Chaplains  
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations  
Department of the Navy  
Washington, D.C. 20370  
Telephone: 202/694-4624

Applications for reserve or National Guard appointment participate in the same endorsing procedures as those for active duty, and it is understood that



such applicants are willing to enter active duty if called during an emergency situation. Each denomination has a quota for chaplains on active duty. The DCRM nominates, in order of best qualified, those applicants who will be considered by each service for appointment to active duty.

### **The Endorsement Process Application**

Applications are available by contacting DCRM. Specify the setting to which you want to be endorsed. Complete and return the application and required materials.

DCRM will contact your references, including your bishop, your district superintendent, and your Board of Ordained Ministry. We suggest that you contact DCRM to determine the progress of your application from time to time.

When all your materials have been received and if you meet the requirements, you will be scheduled for an interview with a committee in your region. DCRM will cover your expenses for the initial interview. Should a subsequent interview be required those expenses are your responsibility.

### **The Interview**

Standing interviewing committees serve each region. These committees are made up of endorsed chaplains, DCRM members, and annual conference repre-

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sentatives. At least one member of the committee will represent the setting for which you seek endorsement.

The purpose of this interview is to understand your perception of Christian faith as related to the setting in which you desire to minister. Areas examined will include your ability to articulate a coherent theory of Christian ministry, understand and evaluate your present ministry situation, show the capacity to relate appropriately to colleagues in ministry, and demonstrate a realistic understanding of church structure and other areas which affect your ministry.

One member of the committee will serve as presenter for you and will be especially familiar with your materials.

Following the interview the committee will make a recommendation to the endorsing committee. You will be informed of the recommendation at the time of your interview, and you will also receive a copy of the written recommendation.

The committee may recommend endorsement, no endorsement, or provisional endorsement. A recommendation for provisional endorsement will include specific requirements to be fulfilled before full endorsement can be issued. Provisional endorsement is normally for a one year period.

If you disagree with the recommendation of the interviewing committee, you may appeal the recommendation to the endorsing committee either in person or in writing. (You must, however, bear the expense for such an appearance.)

NOTE: This process—from application to endorsement—normally takes four to six months.

### **The Endorsing Committee**

The endorsing committee is composed of the ordained members of DCRM, including some endorsed chaplains, and is chaired by a bishop. They meet four times a year and have responsibility for policy and practice regarding endorsement. This committee will act on the recommendation of your interviewing committee and, if so determined, will grant endorsement.

If you are endorsed, a copy of your endorsement will be sent to your employer, your bishop, and your Board of Ordained Ministry. You will receive two copies for your files.

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# 13

## Steps Into Mission Service

### Mission Personnel Resources Program Department

Within the General Board of Global Ministries, the Mission Personnel Resource Program Department serves the church in the identification, recruitment, selection, preparation, training and nurture of persons in mission service. It also carries responsibility to promote opportunities for mission service, administration of the Crusade Scholarship Program which prepares persons for leadership in mission, and to develop in cooperation with conferences and jurisdictions opportunities for persons to participate in short-term volunteer service in mission. Whether a person is looking for life-time, three-year, two-year or short-term involvement, the candidate's first stop will be with Mission Personnel Resources.

MPRPD keeps the list of openings for extended mission service up-to-date. If you would like to receive the most recent listing of United States and international mission opportunities, write to:

United Methodist Board of Global Ministries  
Mission Personnel Resources  
Room 1470, 475 Riverside Drive  
New York, New York 10115  
212/870-3662

MPRPD also is responsible for shepherding the recruitment and selection process. It trains new persons in mission as they get ready to go and as they continue to serve.

### Steps in Making Application for all Categories of Missionary Service

The following are the usual steps for applying to go into missionary service through the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The timelines vary from program to program. They usually cover at least one year. Each applicant is encouraged to inquire about this when making application.



*Preliminary Inquiry:* An indication or inquiry regarding a desire to become a person in mission is sent to the Mission Personnel Resources Program Department, which acknowledges and sends appropriate materials.

*Preliminary Application and Reference Check:* The applicant returns the completed MPRPD form, references sheet and skills sheet. (If couples apply, each is expected to complete the forms).

*Introduction to Mission Vocations:* Periodically events are held which serve to introduce applicants to the various mission programs, to explore the meaning of mission and its Biblical and Theological foundation, to deepen the understanding of the dynamics of mission service in the USA and in other countries, to provide opportunity for cross cultural experiences and a test of one's own adaptability, to test out ones desire to serve in a mission vocation in light of personal faith, commitment skills, and training, and to establish a personal relationship with representatives of the General Board of Global Ministries.

*Period of Discernment and Full Application Review:* A time for personal reflection as to whether one wants to continue toward mission service and a thorough look at the qualification of each candidate applying for a mission assignment.

*Psychological Profile:* This profile is done at the expense of the General Board of Global Ministries and is arranged by MPRPD in consultation with the candidate.

It is done for all full-time overseas candidates and for some candidates for continuing service in the United States. (This step may sometimes take place during the Introduction to Mission Vocation event.)

*Candidate Interviews:* The interviews are arranged by MPRPD staff and include persons from MPRPD and the Division Program Unit. Occasionally, a representative of the receiving community will also interview the candidate. (This step may sometimes take place during the Introduction to Mission Vocation event.)

*Physical Examination:* The physical examination is done at the expense of the General Board of Global Ministries by a certified medical doctor.

*Approval of Candidates:* A recommendation for the approval of each candidate is made by the Directors of the Recruitment and Selection Section of MPRPD, through the Directors of MPRPD, to the Directors of the General Board of Global Ministries. Final action is taken by this body.

*Placement:* The receiving body is sent the papers for prospective candidates and a recommendation for placement of a candidate to fill their personnel needs. A letter of invitation for the candidate is then sent back to the General Board of Global Ministries from the receiving body.

*Orientation, Training and Commissioning:* This phase is focused on the context in which the person will serve and the requirements of the receiving community. It may be in a group situation or it may be done in an individual approach.

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# 14

## Certification in Areas of Specialized Ministry

The certification of persons as educators, musicians, and evangelists by the United Methodist Church was born of a desire on the part of persons in these fields to serve the church with excellence. **It is available to qualifying persons whether they are laity, ordained, or diaconal ministers.** Certification is the church's recognition that an individual has met the required standards for academic training, experience, and continuing study necessary to achieve and maintain professional excellence in these areas. The church's need for individuals who can serve to the best of their ability makes certification by the United Methodist Church of increasing importance to professional church workers. The following are steps to be taken by persons seeking certification in education, music, or evangelism.

### STEP 1

Persons seeking certification by the United Methodist Church in education, music, or evangelism should contact the registrar of their annual conference Board of Diaconal Ministry, stating their interest. (For the name and address of the registrar of your annual conference Board of Diaconal Ministry, contact your annual conference office.)

### STEP 2

Leaflet number HE4010 (educators), HE4020 (musicians), HE4030 (evangelists) should be studied to determine whether or not requirements have been met at the time of application. Leaflets mentioned here are available from the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry.

### STEP 3

Persons must have the following minimum personal, church, and professional qualifications:

- Recognized Christian character, personal competence, integrity, and commitment to the church's total ministry and mission.

- Ability to function in the role with emotional maturity and sound judgment; ability to relate to people, and to work with volunteers and staff.
- Demonstrated leadership; ability to integrate theory and practice; an understanding of and commitment to the educational ministry of the church.
- A full member of the United Methodist Church for at least one year. (Not an associate member of the United Methodist Church.)
- Knowledge of the United Methodist Church's structure, polity, curriculum resources, program, and mission.

#### STEP 4

They must meet the educational standards set by the Division of Diaconal Ministry, of the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. There are three kinds of certification: (1) associate, (2) director, and (3) minister in each field—evangelism, music, and education. Each of them has its own academic requirements. It is important to carefully study the appropriate leaflet.

For further information regarding specific courses that are required for associate status, ask the conference board for leaflet HE4067. The courses are graduate level and are approximately two weeks in length. They are offered only at United Methodist seminaries or graduate schools.

For information regarding where and when certification studies for associates are currently being offered, ask the conference board for the latest listing published annually by the Division of Diaconal Ministry.

NOTE: Certification courses are not the same as the Foundational Studies required for diaconal ministry.

#### STEP 5

Persons seeking certification as directors or ministers of evangelism, music, or education must have one year's experience in the area of their respective discipline. This experience can be gained either through two years in a full-time job or two years under appointment in a local United Methodist Church.

Persons seeking to be certified as associates in evangelism, education, or music must have four years of employment experience in music, evangelism, or education in a local United Methodist Church. These four years may run concurrently with four years of study through the Certification Studies program or may follow them but may not precede Certification Studies.

#### STEP 6

Following the required experience for the certification level being sought, individuals may apply for certification using forms HE4011 (education), HE4021



(music), or HE4031 (evangelism) which they may obtain from the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry. Part I of the completed form must be sent to the annual conference Board of Diaconal Ministry; Part II of the completed form must be sent to the Division of Diaconal Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

#### **STEP 7**

A minimum of five references from persons acquainted with each applicant's personal, church, and professional qualifications must be submitted. Among the five persons must be a United Methodist minister, a college or seminary professor under whom the individual has studied, and a general officer in a local church with whom the educator, evangelist, or musician has worked.

#### **STEP 8**

Upon vote by the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry that the applicant has satisfactorily met all requirements for certification, the conference board notifies the Division of Diaconal Ministry that the applicant is approved. After satisfactory review by the division, the certificate is issued and sent to the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry.

#### **STEP 9**

The conference Board of Diaconal Ministry presents the certificate to the individual, possibly at a session of the annual conference.



### STEP 10

Certification is subject to annual review and approval by the conference Board of Diaconal Ministry. The individual must continue to meet the standards maintained by the Division of Diaconal Ministry. Each year the conference board will send a copy of form HE4004, which must be completed and returned by the date specified. Certification is renewable for as long as the certified person desires it—contingent upon satisfactory completion of the renewal form, which includes an active program of continuing education, and approval of the conference board.

*For further information contact:*

Annual Conference Board of Diaconal Ministry

or

Division of Diaconal Ministry

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

The United Methodist Church

Box 871

Nashville, Tennessee 37202

615/327-2700

Other forms of certification provided by the United Methodist church are as follows:

*Church business administrators by:*

Division of Field Service  
General Council on Finance and Administration  
1200 Davis Street  
Evanston, Illinois 60201  
312/869-3345

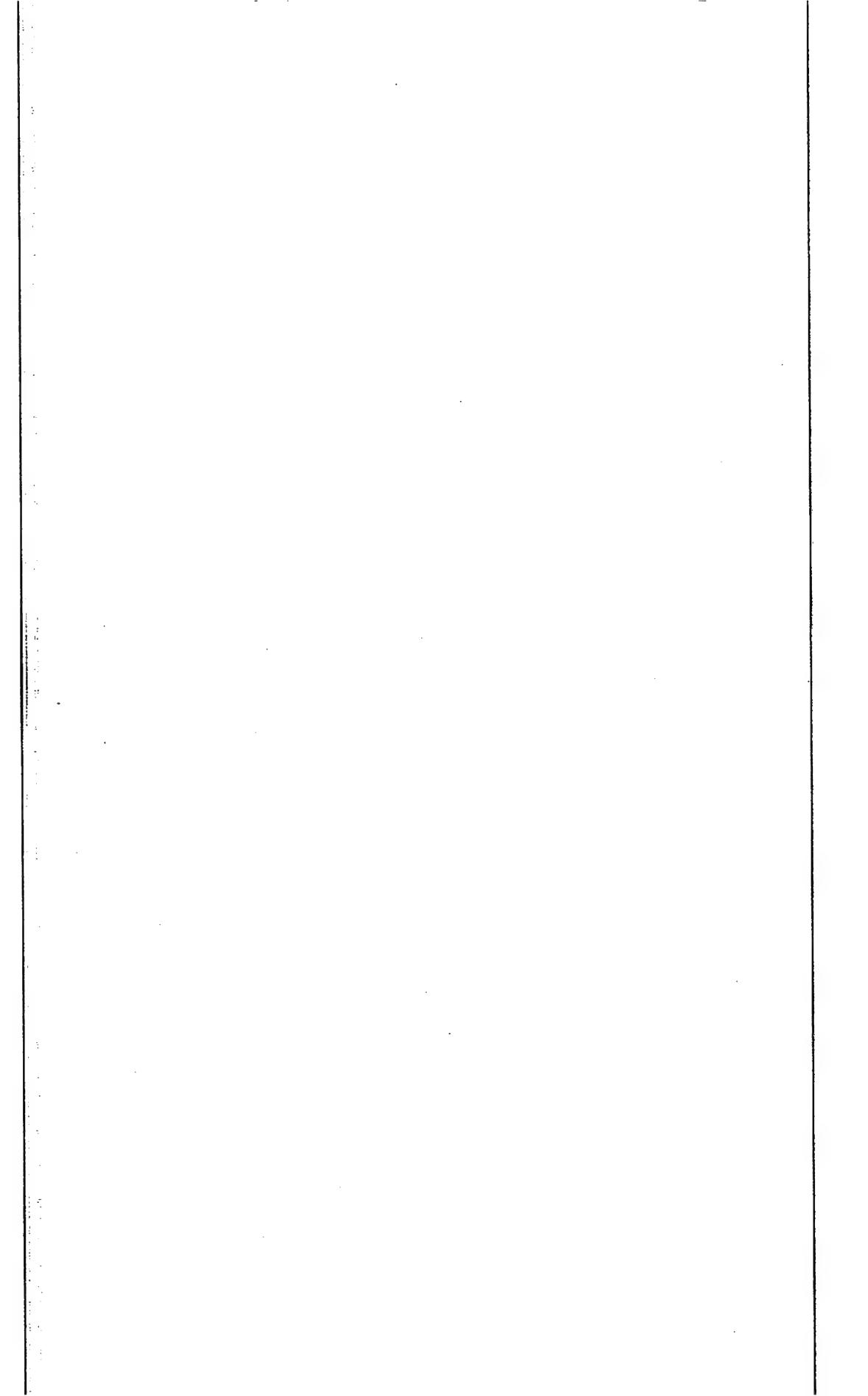
*Church communications by:*

United Methodist Communications  
810 12th Avenue South  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
615/256-0530

*Church and community workers by:*

Office of Mission Personnel Resources  
General Board of Global Ministries  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, New York 10115  
212/870-3662

All these certifications are administered directly by the national agencies and require personal, church, academic, and experiential requirements. For more information, you may want to contact them directly.



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## **PART IV:**

### *Guidelines*



# 15

## Guidelines for the Minister

As a pastor, chaplain, campus minister, diaconal, or ordained minister of the United Methodist Church, one of the most significant and satisfying tasks you have is to help identify, advise, and assist those called to servant leadership in our denomination. The *Discipline* states that it is your duty:

To search out from among the membership and constituency men and women for pastoral ministry and other church-related occupations: to help them interpret the meaning of the call of God, to advise and assist when they commit themselves thereto, to counsel with them concerning the course of their preparation, and to keep a careful record of such decisions.

—Par. 439.11, 1984 *Discipline*

For many this responsibility is not so much a duty as it is the joy and satisfaction of relating to people and their deepest level of need at the time of a major vocational decision.

As a minister, you can assist those persons exploring vocational options in many ways. You can direct them to *The Christian As Minister*, a vocational guide for service opportunities in the United Methodist Church. You can meet with them and use *The Christian As Minister* as the basis of a series of conversations on the meaning of Christian vocation. You can help them see beyond the seemingly impersonal, formal requirements for ministry in the United Methodist Church to the intention of the church to find the most effective persons for its leadership. You may also have opportunities to help inquiring persons examine a variety of leadership possibilities, receive feedback on their leadership potential, and test their leadership skills. You may also have insights about their family and background that will be helpful to the individuals or to the committees that may consider them for ministerial service.

If you know of serious factors that may indicate a negative decision by a committee of the church, or if you see reasons that the individual should not be encouraged further in the exploration of a particular form of ministry, it is very

important that you discuss these with the individual. Regardless of the outcome of the inquiry, you are still the individual's minister and as such, your concern is equally for the inquirer and the future leadership needs of the church.

*The Christian As Minister* was written to assist you in your vocational guidance work with your church or constituency. In using this resource, the following guidelines may be helpful:

1. Carefully read through *The Christian As Minister*.
  - As you become familiar with its contents, you will see various ways it can be used in the interpretation of God's call to ministry. You may also discover new information about the options for ministerial service, their standards and requirements.
  - The more thoroughly you know the contents of this vocational guide, the better equipped you will be to inform your church or constituency and counsel those who sense a call to some form of Christian service.
2. Order a supply of *The Christian As Minister* for your study, church library, office, or work place.
  - Use sections of the book with your Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee, confirmation class, or any other group that wishes to study the meaning of Christian vocation.
  - Give a copy to persons you believe are considering a church-related occupation. Ask them to study the book carefully and note any questions or insight gained.
3. Offer to counsel with those inquiring into church-related occupations.
  - Use *The Christian As Minister* as a resource for that guidance.
  - Explore the meaning of God's ministry, Christ's call to servant leadership, an understanding of vocation, and the options for ministry in the United Methodist Church.
  - Help the inquirers to see themselves as others see them, and to appreciate the gifts and graces they bring to various vocational choices.
  - Give them exposure to a variety of forms of ministry through research, observations, and interviewing.
  - Help them to view a variety of options before making any commitments to further exploration.
  - Once a tentative decision is made, clarify the steps to be taken in order to make that vocational choice a reality.
4. Use *The Christian As Minister* as a study guide with the Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee.
  - Help the committee to gain insight into a theology of ministry.
  - Review the committee's responsibility for interviewing and recommending candidates for ordained and diaconal ministry to the charge conference.

- Clarify the steps a candidate must take in order to enter diaconal or ordained ministry.
- Discuss the resources the church can provide to assist a person who wishes to enter a church-related occupation.
- Identify other resources available through the district, conference, or general agencies of the church that can assist as well.

5. Maintain confidentiality.

- Those inquiring into church-related occupations need the freedom to explore their vocational options without a premature disclosure of their intentions.
- Confidentiality is needed to prevent a premature commitment of a congregation to a candidate. When this occurs there is always the danger that an inquirer may respond by making a commitment to the wrong vocational choice, or perhaps the right choice for the wrong reasons.
- Confidentiality at the inquiring stage is also essential for those contemplating a career change. Unnecessary pressure is often brought to bear on an employee when it is discovered that s/he is even thinking about changing a career.

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# 16

## Guidelines for the Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations Committee

The enlistment, guidance, and support of candidates for ordained and diaconal ministry in the United Methodist Church is not a responsibility of the pastor alone. It is a duty which is shared with the Committee on Pastor-Parish (Staff-Parish) Relations (P(S)PRC). The duties of the committee include the following:

To enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend annually to the Charge Conference persons for candidacy for ministry, recognizing that The United Methodist Church affirms the biblical and theological support of women and men of all races and ethnic origin for ministry. The committee shall provide to the Charge Conference a list of ministerial students from the charge and shall maintain contact with these students, supplying the Charge Conference with a progress report on each student.

—Par. 267.2f(6), 1984 *Discipline*

For the sake of the candidates and the enhancement of ministry in the United Methodist Church, this responsibility of the P(S)PRC must not be taken lightly. Candidates need the affirmation and support of the committee in order to enter candidacy for ordained or diaconal ministry. They need the resources a P(S)PRC can coordinate in the local church for those it recommends. Candidates will also benefit from regular contact with the committee as they prepare to meet the educational and other requirements of their vocational choice.

The P(S)PRC plays an important role in the selection of qualified candidates for ministerial leadership in the United Methodist Church. No one knows the candidate better than the membership of the local church. The recommendation of the committee to the charge conference and, in turn, the recommendation of the charge conference to the district Committee on Ordained Ministry or conference Board of Diaconal Ministry is a crucial gate through which all candidates must pass in order to enter diaconal or ordained ministry. It is the one



place where the *Discipline* requires the approval of the lay leadership of the local church in the candidacy selection process. It is the one opportunity the local church has to be sure that candidates for ministry meet the criteria and expectations of the local church. If you are concerned about the quality of ministerial leadership in our denomination today, here is the place to address that need.

Finally, let it be noted that although the *Discipline* requires that only candidates for ordained and diaconal ministry be enlisted, guided, and supported through the P(S)PRC, there is no reason why this committee cannot involve itself in the enlistment of persons for all forms of Christian service. If the committee, the pastor, and the Administrative Board/Council so determine, the committee can have a significant impact on the way the local church looks at the matter of Christian vocation and the quality of persons enlisted for all forms of church-related service. Such a task, well done, not only affirms those persons identified as potential servant leaders, but broadens the vision of the congregation in terms of the nature of Christian vocation, awakens the church to the potential that exists for addressing the ministerial needs of the church, and gives the local church the satisfaction of knowing that it is playing a significant role in the shaping of ministry for the future.

As you go about the work of fulfilling this responsibility in your church, the following guidelines may be helpful:



- Review *The Christian As Minister* with your pastor and, if necessary, clarify the role of the committee in the enlistment of candidates for ministry.
- Have the chairperson of the P(S)PRC meet with a candidate prior to the meeting where s/he will be interviewed to clarify the purpose of the meeting and the expectations of the committee.
- If a written statement is to be prepared, agree on the form it will take, and communicate that information to the candidate.
- The meeting with the candidate may be informal and spontaneous. If the candidate is invited to make a brief oral statement of his/her current decisions and interests, the committee members and the candidate may then be free to discuss any issues that seem important.
- While conducting an interview, the committee may wish to keep in mind the historic questions first asked by John Wesley in 1746. These questions which apply to ordained ministry, and a parallel set which apply to diaconal ministry, are as follows:

#### **Wesley's Questions for Examiners**

In order that The United Methodist Church may be assured that those persons who present themselves as candidates for ministry are truly called of

God to this office, let those who consider recommending such persons for candidacy as ordained ministers in The United Methodist Church prayerfully and earnestly ask themselves these questions:

1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?
2. Have they gifts, as well as grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?
3. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their preaching?

As long as these marks concur in them, we believe they are called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit.

—Par. 403, 1984 *Discipline*

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### The Historic Questions as Applied to Candidates for Diaconal Ministry

The diaconal ministry is recognized by The United Methodist Church as a called-out and set-apart ministry. Therefore, it is appropriate that those persons who present themselves as candidates for diaconal ministry be examined regarding the authenticity of their call by God to this office. Accordingly, let those who consider recommending such persons for candidacy as diaconal ministers in The United Methodist Church prayerfully and earnestly ask themselves these historic questions, as applied to the nature of diaconal ministry:

1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?
2. Have they gifts, as well as graces, for the work of diaconal ministry? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they show forth that love in service to others? Have they an abiding sense of the urgency for justice in the world?
3. Have they fruit? Are others edified by their service?

As long as these signs are visible in them, we believe they are called of God to serve. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit.

—Par. 303, 1984 *Discipline*

- The decision of the P(S)PRC should be based on more than just the individual's appearance and presentation to the committee. It should also consider how well this person has done in the life of the local church over

an extended period of time. This is the reason for the requirement of the candidate having been a member of the local church for at least a year.

- As the committee interviews a candidate for ministry, the following questions may be important:

1. In what ways has this person actually experienced God's forgiveness and grace? Does this show in the way s/he lives? How?
2. Does this person have personal habits that enhance his/her witness as a Christian? Which personal habits diminish or negate that witness?
3. What gifts, skills, abilities does this person have? Can s/he speak clearly and comfortably before a large group and in a small discussion group? What impression or feeling do you get from being with this person? Does this person seem confident, poised, relaxed, open, warm, friendly, attractive as a person?
4. How does this person relate to his/her family? Are relatives (parents, siblings, spouse if any) supportive of the person's candidacy for ministry? Is this person being discouraged by some family members? Why? Do some family members seem to be pushing this person into some form of ministry as a career? In what ways?
5. Does this person seem to have the intellectual ability (appropriate to his/her age) to study effectively and work easily with the Bible, theological issues, and the subject matter of the intended career? Has this person had relatively good grades in high school and college (if any)?
6. How does this person relate to authority persons, such as church leaders, pastors, managers, teachers, employers, and others who supervise his/her work in some way? Is this person independent, assertive, yet cooperative and pleasant?
7. What evidence of effectiveness in church-related leadership has this person already shown? Describe these. To what extent were these the result of this person's initiative and abilities, as compared to being someone else's work that this person merely followed or used?
8. What other evidences of future potential has this person shown?
9. How committed does this person seem to be to the gospel of Christ and servant ministry in the United Methodist Church? To what extent may salary, prestige, and other rewards be important to this person? How does s/he respond to discouragement, failure, disagreements, and other adverse conditions that are often part of ministry? Will this person be comfortable with the possible restrictions that ministry in the connectional structure of Methodism may impose in some situations?
10. What other evidences do you have that the person will enhance and improve the quality of ministry in the United Methodist Church?



- Before a candidate is recommended to the charge conference, the chairperson and pastor can encourage the committee members, if they have not already done so, to invite informal, confidential comments from church members and others who know the applicant. If concerns should be expressed about the applicant's fitness for the ordained or diaconal ministry, the P(S)PRC may want to delay making a recommendation to the charge conference until it has time to examine the comments and consult with the applicant about them.
- When announcements are made that the charge conference will be voting on a recommendation of candidacy for ordained or diaconal ministry, an open invitation should be given to any person who wishes to consult privately and confidentially with the pastor or P(S)PRC chairperson about the applicant. In this way it is more likely that varied points of view will be heard and any negative comments will be dealt with in a constructive way.
- If potential trouble areas do appear from any of these sources, the pastor and the P(S)PRC chairperson can decide how to use them in the most constructive manner with the applicant. It may be appropriate to consult with the person offering negative information, delay making a recommendation to the charge conference, or take other action prior to the conference if it is likely that the conference may not be able to handle the issues in a public meeting.

- If the announcements of the meeting are made properly, and if no serious issues become known that should be handled privately with the applicant, the charge conference meeting provides the public occasion when the church gives its formal endorsement of the applicant.
- The chairperson of the P(S)PRC will want to review and emphasize the important decision facing the charge conference. Quoting from some of the *Disciplinary* statements or from the questions suggested for the P(S)PRC may help the members present to see the great importance and the challenge of ordained or diaconal ministry.
- The chairperson may then offer the candidate the opportunity to make a brief presentation to the conference as a way of introducing or renewing acquaintance with all persons present.
- The chairperson of the P(S)PRC should then report on the committee's recommendation to the charge conference, and the reasons for that recommendation should be spelled out in some detail.
- Time may then be allowed for others to comment and present evidence that would support or deny the recommendation.
- The general tone and atmosphere of the conference meeting should be warm, relaxed, and flexible to allow for serious consideration of the decision.
- The charge conference, like the P(S)PRC must keep in mind these two objectives in its decision:
  1. To do what is in the best interest of the United Methodist Church and the enhancement of its ministry.
  2. To exhibit a pastoral concern for the individual, regardless of the outcome of the decision.
- The P(S)PRC must consider ways in which it can maintain its relationship with the candidates it affirms. Candidates for ordained ministry require an annual recommendation from the committee and the charge conference until they become local pastors or probationary members of the annual conference. Candidates for diaconal ministry require such an annual recommendation until they are consecrated as diaconal ministers.
- For further guidance in the work of the P(S)PRC with candidates for ministry, consult the "Guidelines for Leadership in the Local Church: 1985-88, Pastor-Parish Relations."

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